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#### How to cite:

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Version: Version of Record

Link(s) to article on publisher's website:

<http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21954/ou.ro.0000fc61>

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"'Girls getting it together': a study of race,  
class and gender through the writings  
of young women"

This thesis is submitted for the award of PhD

School of Educational Studies, Open University

Date of submission: 29th September 1989

Date of award: 22nd December 1989

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to examine the relationship between educational processes and class and gender reproduction. Such an investigation cannot avoid the ways in which racism and sexism affects the lives and schooling of young women.

A significant theme running through the study addresses structuring processes within schools, the organisation of family life and the social relations of female waged labour. The study attempts to analyse the complexity of female social experience by bringing together the writings of young women across class, racial and educational boundaries.

An unusual aspect of the study lies within the method of data collection. The writers who were drawn from a variety of class and ethnic backgrounds were encouraged to write about the material and emotional circumstances of their lives. The instances that are used within the study highlight the ways in which class, gender, racial and patriarchal relations produce contradiction, conflict and resistance.

The act of writing is not only seen as a way of examining specific experiences, it is also seen as a means of developing cultural literacy. Working class women, girls who have moderate learning difficulties and women from ethnic minorities seldom see definitions of their own specific social world portrayed within literature.

The act of writing is used to examine the material circumstances of women's lives in relation to class and ethnic associations as well as in relation to male power relations.

Finally, the thesis emphasises the significance of writing as an educational and political strategy which can be used to examine both male and female forms of consciousness.



## CHAPTER ONE

### A search for a theory and a method

My thesis is concerned with the ways in which processes of schooling together with the organisation of family life are related to forms of female consciousness. Such an investigation cannot avoid an examination of the social relations of domestic life or an analysis of the structure of female waged labour.

This thesis explores the complex interactions which occur when class and gender relations coalesce. The thesis includes an examination into the ways in which ethnicity affects female consciousness. It is also concerned with the reproduction of racism. There is an attempt to examine how both ideological and structural forms of control affect the lives of female students. The thesis not only examines the organisation of the curriculum, differing forms of gender control and the social relations of the family, it is also concerned with the structure of female employment. It also looks at gender dynamics and the social construction of gender identity, examining closely the ways in which femininity is constructed in relation to male approval.

This chapter will show how I came to formulate my own position, how I constructed my methodology, and how I have attempted to draw upon a variety of approaches in order to develop an analysis which uses both

ethnographic detail and links those findings with wider social and economic relationships.

The thesis begins with an introduction to the main theoretical concepts which are the framework of the study. There is also an analysis of the importance of how and why I thought "girls writing" was a significant part of my methodology. This analysis will also isolate some of the problems I encountered in using this approach. Writing for women and girls is not an uncommon activity. Women use diaries as a means of trying to unravel the complexities of their lives. Friendships between women are maintained over time and distance by letters. Writing can also be an important form of action. Writing can also help to understand our history and contemporary experience.

Central to my study is an examination of the relationship between educational processes and class and gender reproduction. I consider that it is not possible to investigate the relationship between schooling and class relations without a stringent examination of the different ways in which girls and boys experience class relations.

Chapter Two focuses upon a critique of the work of Althusser (1971), Bowles and Gintis (1976) and Apple (1979, 1981, 1982) and (1982b). I also explore the work of Arnot (1980, 1981, 1982, 1984) and Anyon (1983)

This Chapter considers too some of the theoretical problems associated with Marxist feminist analysis which includes an examination and discussion of the domestic labour debate.

In Chapter Three I suggest ways in which class, race and gender may be interrelated. This will be done by means of an investigation into the ways in which school processes are related to class and patriarchal relations within family life. Chapter Four contains data produced by the girls with whom I worked which demonstrates how writers from different class and cultural backgrounds perceive themselves as wives and mothers. Chapter Five analyses the "double burden" involved in the reproduction of waged and domestic labour in women. There is a full discussion of theories of labour market segmentation, the structure of black female labour and the structure of part-time female labour and home working. There are examples from the writings produced by the girls which show how they perceived the significance of waged labour. In Chapter Six there is an analysis of the relationship between schooling and economic life. This includes interpretation of the girls' written accounts which concentrate upon the ways in which the girls perceive themselves as future workers.

In Chapter Seven I have analysed the significance of resistance to class and gender stereotyping. I have shown by referring to examples of the girls' written material, how the writers often find themselves facing contradictory social relations. The girls use a variety of responses to negotiate those meanings.

My final chapter asks questions about the possibility of constructing a feminist pedagogy. Using the data supplied by the writers I consider whether or not their writings can be accommodated by teachers using a feminist approach. There is a discussion and some concluding remarks concerned with the different theoretical approaches to gender inequity and the ways in which educational establishments are organised. I have also indicated some of the ways in which my research will be helpful to teachers and researchers, thus highlighting the ways in which writing is a useful and helpful way of collecting data. There are suggestions of a practical kind for teachers who intend using this method of data collection as a basis for pedagogy. I touch briefly on issues concerned with the construction of masculinity and the possible ways in which teachers could use writing when working with boys groups. There has been an increase in the last few years in the amount of interest shown in the ways in which the experience of schooling, preparation for waged work and family life differs for boys and girls. Arnot (1980, 1981, 1982, 1984) has drawn our attention to the fact that any investigation into the reproduction

of male and female relations must focus on both the structure of patriarchy and the structure of class relations. She argues that any theory of class reproduction must recognise the existence of both class and male hegemony and (Arnot 1984) reminds us that the role of schooling is intricately bound up with the social reproduction of female waged and domestic labour. She claims that working class culture differs from the bourgeois culture which is transmitted in schools and that working class divisions. Working class girls will of course have the additional task of negotiating both class and patriarchal relations. In an attempt to reformulate the theories of political economy theorists she has also indicated that we cannot investigate the relationship between schooling and the economy without examining the social relations of the family household and the changing demands of the capitalist system of production.

Whilst finding Arnot's suggestion extremely helpful I have found that I needed to expand her arguments to include evidence of the ways in which girls are placed between the world of economic production and family life. My thesis is concerned with the ways in which schooling produces and reproduces forms of female consciousness, I have placed importance and significance upon the personal detailed accounts produced by the writers. It can be clearly seen that all girls do not experience schooling and social life in the same way. Nor do they approach waged labour in a similar manner.

In order to further develop my analysis I have turned to the work of ethnographers who were involved in collecting data which was concerned with the reality of school life as experienced by female students.

Anyon (1983), Davies (1984), Delamont (1983), Stanworth (1981), Clarricoates (1980), Griffin (1985) and Lees (1986) have all made contributions to the debate. Working from different perspectives the writers have collected data from female students. The data has been integrated into both neo-Marxist accounts of the relationship between schooling and the economy and alternative accounts which are based within phenomenologically constructed accounts of classroom processes. I hope within this chapter to show how I have drawn on a variety of perspectives in order to examine the complexity of the relationship between processes of schooling and the reproduction of female consciousness.

Fuller's (1982) work is of particular interest to my study. Her account of the ways in which Afro-Caribbean girls negotiated their way through class, race and gender relations in order to resist both racist and class assumptions shows that resistance to stereotypical definitions does not always involve radical strategies. The black girls used a combination of conformity in gaining academic qualifications and inattentiveness to classroom interactions in order to resist being labelled inferior as black women.

An outline of my intentions: collecting the data

In this section of the chapter I will describe how I collected the data which was to become the substantive content of my thesis. Later in the chapter I will analyse some of the strengths and weaknesses of this approach. I would like to stress at this point that collecting the writings and categorising them was a significant element in the methodological process.

I began by setting up a series of adolescent Girls Writing Groups in five different settings. I was fortunate enough to gain access to five settings and worked in those areas for a period of three months. The settings included a mixed youth club where I worked with a group of girls, a girls group in a church youth group, a group in a mixed comprehensive, and a group from a single sex secondary school. I also worked with a group of girls who attended a single sex grammar school and had reached the lower sixth form. The girls who attended this school were all middle class whilst the other girls mainly came from backgrounds which were working class. Many of the girls came from families where their fathers were unemployed and about a third of the contributors came from ethnic minorities, mainly Afro-Caribbean or Indian.

When discussing access, to those girls based in schools, the head teachers or others in charge, were

anxious to know what I intended doing with my findings. They also wanted to know how the school would benefit from my activity. I explained that I would work within school or youth club hours, that I would not disrupt the organisation of the establishment and that at the end of the term I would give each girl an anthology of their material. My intention was to try and collect as many different accounts as possible, contributed by girls from different classes and ethnic backgrounds. I also wanted the settings to be as varied as access arrangements allowed. It is worthwhile at this point to refer to factors which affect whether or not access is possible. Becker (1970) refers to people who have the power to grant access as gatekeepers. In my case I had to gain permission to use schools and youth clubs as sites where I was to collect my data. Not only did I have to set a 'bargain' with the 'gatekeepers' who in my research project were head-teachers and youth leaders, I also had to set a bargain with the writers who were the subjects of my research. I tried to present my intentions as clearly and honestly as was possible indicating that I felt it was extremely important that girls were given the opportunity of discussing, debating, writing and sharing specific issues which related to their experience of schooling and family life. I also asked if we could discuss and write about our sexuality and the ways in which we anticipated future jobs and careers as well as marriage and partnership.



Having gained the confidence of the "gate-keepers" I had to assure the writers that their work would remain anonymous and that in no way would I betray any confidence. The writings would be shared amongst the group at the end of the final session. By stressing the importance of the quality of the relationship between myself and the writers, I realise that I run the risk of problems of data invalidation. Moser (1958) has warned against over identification with the subject. But Ferrarotti (1981) has affirmed that in the search for sociological data "knowledge does not have "the other" as its object, instead it should have inextricable and absolutely reciprocal interaction between the observer and the observed" (page 28). In order to explain what I mean by this I would emphasise that the ways in which I collected the data by discussion, debate, argument and anonymous writing was an extremely important part of my methodology (1). I hoped that the quality of the data would be influenced by the quality of the relationship I had with the girls. The context in which the girls were encouraged to write was planned and I made efforts to ensure that we were alone, the environment was pleasant and that it was not compulsory to contribute to each session. Measor (1985) has suggested that in order to obtain good qualitative data the researcher should spend a certain amount of time considering appropriate strategies which build up a relationship between researcher and respondent. I hope that in my relationship with the writers I was able to present them with a variety of contexts in which they

could experience different aspects of female experience. I hope that my analysis however remains critical despite the fact that I too became a writer during all of the sessions.

Donald Graves (1984) has developed an extensive programme for teachers in which they are encouraged to examine their own writing in order to feel comfortable with the teaching of writing. I was in no way "teaching writing" in the writers' groups but rather in Giroux's (1987) words "developing a cultural politics of literacy and pedagogy" which became an important starting point for enabling those who have been silenced or marginalised by the school to reclaim authorship of their own lives. I intended the act of writing itself to be a commitment and attempted to show the writers that the act of writing is a means of discovering one's own uniqueness and a process whereby it is possible to examine one's own feelings.

#### The methodology of collecting the writings

My first task was to gain access to a variety of educational establishments and youth clubs which was not an easy task. This was eased by the fact that I had taught in the area for a considerable amount of time and had contacts within the youth service. One of the schools was a Girls Grammar School which was situated on the other side of the city where, I anticipated, it

would be difficult to gain access. I was, however, extremely fortunate to encounter a most sympathetic sixth form teacher who was willing to let me have access to the students for three months.

It was not difficult to gain access to the Girls High School as the head teacher was anxious that the girls had access to my material. At the Comprehensive School the contact person was an outreach worker who had recently gained a post graduate qualification. She had reared two daughters on her own and was most anxious that the female students were aware that financial and emotional independence were important aspects of life as an adult female. I gained access to the youth club through a male colleague who was a part-time youth leader. The leader of the club treated me as he treated the female members of the youth club. We had to fight for space, were constantly interrupted and marginalised. The deaconess was a friend and invited me to join the girls' group which met weekly at her home. This was the most sympathetic situation.

My object, once the writing groups were set up, was to use a variety of strategies to enable the writers to explore specific issues which were related to their female experience. Membership of each was voluntary and the girls were allowed to come and go according to their wishes. At the Comprehensive School and the single sex Secondary School the writers had to go to other optional subjects if they decided against the

writing option. In all the groups there was a consistent core group of members. At no time was pressure exerted upon the group to attend.

The preparation of writing varied enormously. At the end of each session we spent time, varying from half an hour to an hour, writing. Only very occasionally did the girls write in between sessions. This activity was mainly undertaken by the members of the sixth form who were prepared to write at great length.

I would like now to detail some of the ways in which we prepared to write. Sometimes we would sit round in a circle and begin a sentence .... "the worst thing about my brother is". Answers would be very different and would lead on to discussion about our relationships with different family members. At the end of this session we wrote to a title such as "Reasons for leaving home" or "I was closest to my mother when". All these accounts were related to our everyday situation. On other occasions we wrote about possible scenarios which we may have to face in the future such as having an unwanted child, or a situation in which a partner was offered a job in a different part of the country. We also wrote pieces about where we saw ourselves in ten or twenty years. It is important to stress that preceding all our writing activities, whether related to our current situation or to a future situation, we engaged in some type of game, reading an article, discussing a

current situation in school or at home, enacting a role play or doing some type of group exercise. If other adults were present they took part in the activity and the writing.

One of the ways in which I attempted to establish a reciprocal relationship with the writers was by using trust games (2). In these exercises we spoke about aspects of our lives which were not common to classroom discussion. I was trying to establish areas of interest that we had in common, such as certain aspects and responses to family life or references to our brothers or sisters. I decided also that in order to try and establish some form of rapport and reciprocity I would also participate in the writing, remembering that my primary task was to collect data. In one situation where there was a key informant it was crucial to gain the trust of this member of the group as she had considerable influence over the other writers.

In order to ensure that the writers communicated their ideas as freely as they felt able to do there was a considerable amount of time spent reassuring the girls that their work was confidential, that in the final form it would be typed and that at no point would the girls be required to expose their writing to the group.

The girls had to be encouraged to write and this was not always an easy task as they had little confidence in their ability to produce a written account of their

experiences with the exception of the sixth formers. After setting a theme for the session we would address specific aspects of our lives as daughters, students, sisters or girlfriends. The topics were varied and often suggested by the girls. The most significant accounts were related to the organisation of the family household. They also frequently referred to situations in which they felt other people such as teachers, parents or boyfriends exercised control over their activities. During our sessions in order to stimulate interest in other writing produced by women, I attempted to introduce literature from alternative publishers. The selection included biographies, stories, articles and letters produced by a variety of women across class and cultural boundaries (3).

I worked from between two and three months with each group meeting weekly. The groups were friendly and very informal despite taking place, in some establishments, on school premises and in school time. I evaluated attendance as a measure of success. At the end of the project I made the writings into anthologies each for the specific setting. None of the writings were named but a list of contributors was placed at the beginning of each anthology. None of the writings were edited and all contributions were included. Each school or youth club had their own anthology. I used all the material as data for my thesis. These writings are called "Girls Getting It Together" and form the data base of this research.

### Why Writing?

Rosen (1972) and Warpole (1977) have commented upon the elitism of what is considered as a 'literary work' within the teaching of English. Much of their debate which centres on the failure of working class children to succeed within the education system concentrates upon language and culture. Working class culture has been marginalised and often conceptualised as an undifferentiated set of responses. Warpole (1977) suggests that writing should move away from the individual and reflective activity that characterises most "acceptable forms" of writing, and become a form of cultural production. Writing should move beyond the confidentiality of the diary to an activity which has a social or cultural purpose. Warpole (1977) writes "we perform a disservice to the children we teach if we confirm them in their roles as consumers only, or by practice, never suggest that their writing is anything more than "self expression". In short, they must become authors, and we have to locate their audience ..."

One of my objectives in encouraging the girls to write was to emphasise the different ways in which women experience social life. By using the written form I hoped that the girls would be able to express as freely as possible how they 'made sense' of their world.

Research by Clarricoates (1978), Douglas (1964), Sharpe (1976) has revealed that girls are more successful at primary school when we look at subjects which need verbal and written skills. The percentage of women taking English Language, English Literature and Sociology in exams at sixteen shows at secondary level that girls had developed superior skills in these areas (4). This is one of the reasons why I chose writing as a means of collecting data as women appear to show both verbal and written superiority at primary and secondary level. Not all the girls had these necessary skills however so I had to make suitable provision for transcribing their experiences. In some cases the girls would isolate themselves from the main group and use a tape recorder. Again the material would be transferred to a written form which was included in the anthology (5).

Briefly I would like to explain why I felt that the collection of written accounts was so crucial to my methodology. Literacy skills are often taught as if they are part of another language, referring to events and people from another world. For some social groups there is little which reflects events or language from their own culture. I wanted to convince the girls that their experiences were valuable, worth recording and when shared would construct intuitive connections with other writers. Simone De Beauvoir (1975) explains "when I was a child and an adolescent, reading was not only my favourite pastime, but also the key that opened the



world to me. It fore-told my future. I identified myself with the heroines of novels, and through them I caught glimpses of what my life would be. In the unhappy phases of my youth it preserved me from loneliness; later it broadened my knowledge, increased my experience and helped me to a better understanding of my state as a human being and of the meaning of my own work as a writer"

For De Beauvoir literature was able to make vital connections and assisted her to form some type of cohesiveness and comprehension about her experience within the world. But for working class women prevailing definitions of social reality mean that their experience is often denied. In literature working class women are treated as a submissive unresponsive, often stereotyped group, who are constructed within a symbolic system which is often within the control of male writers. Glastonbury (1979) referring to how female working class experience is treated in literature writes "Women of the labouring classes are mute figures in our cultural landscape, seen and not heard, their exertions supply writers and artists with a source of symbolism, sensuality and satire. On the rare occasions when they speak for themselves, they do so under a special pressure ... For the daily routine of their lives, the conditions of their existence, there is no legitimated voice ... since their pre-occupations are not convertible into the accepted currency of truth"

But working class women have attempted to 'speak for themselves' through the written form. Rose Chernin and her mother left Russia in 1914 and settled in America. Her daughter Kim Chernin decided to attempt to write down her mother's life experiences together with her own in order to capture their relationship. Kim writing about her mother's early experiences in America writes "She arrived in this country as a girl of twelve. An immigrant, struggling for survival, she supported her family when her father ran off and deserted them. To me she gave everything she must have wanted for herself, a girl of thirteen or fourteen, walking home from the factory, exhausted after a day of work ... she was born in a village where most women did not know how to read" (page 15)

De Beauvoir and Chernin emphasise different aspects of their experiences as women, De Beauvoir often referring to the primacy of male definitions of social reality whilst Chernin is more interested in the ways in which her mother and grandmother learned how to survive in an alien and hostile cultural environment.

I do not think that social experience should be confined to definition by either one gender or one dominant group in society. It would be easy to analyse the responses of the writers from a position of intellectual elitism, but I would prefer to be able to share the writings with the girls in such a way that enables us as women to

examine the concrete material circumstances of our lives, not only in relation to our class and ethnic associations but also in relation to male power relations. By using writing as a means of collecting data I hope that my methodology has involved the writers in a process of de-mythologising dominant cultural forms and becoming aware of their place in class and gender relations. Language is a system of symbols and signs and is heavily associated with meanings which are related to the maintenance of a particular set of power relations. Language communicates signs and symbols which represent social relations. These relations are transmitted as if they are unalterable objective facts. They appear as natural and therefore neutral.

I hope that by encouraging the girls to write, to reflect and discuss, I may be able to show them the significance of critical examination of their lives. Relationships are not unalterable, that not all commonsense understandings work to their advantage, and that their lives as women are determined by social, economic, patriarchal and racial relations.

I hope that this study will encourage girls and women to organise their thoughts on paper in order to express feelings, respond to others, and come to terms with their everyday experiences. By this process they may have a glimpse of how to extend control over their female experience. Our writing may show us the constraints under which we experience social and

economic life. Pearlie McNeil (1987) has shown how personal problems, insecure living situations, lack of confidence, absence of role models and poor education all diminish women's potential for writing. She describes "her lack of role models as a working class writer who grew up reading novels about middle class people: she began writing without the slightest assurance that anyone wanted to read about the fabric of her life" (page 14)

Women from oppressed groups have to face a fear of stepping out of line, of offending other members of their class, family group or culture. Not only is writing important as an expressive art; it is also important as part of trade union activity and in the crucial task of using literacy as a tool to gain control over relations which do not work in favour of working class women. The following account shows how a trade union has tackled this issue. "Writing is essential to women's struggle for liberation from second class status, poverty and enforced silence .... illiteracy is a central part of women's subordination .... as a political activity N.U.P.E. the trade union which represents mainly manual workers in the public sector has made support for literacy its official policy, and together with other unions has developed a programme called WORKBASE, which provides literacy and numeracy classes. With their tutor a group of women cleaners in Sheffield learnt how to organise their writing, take

notes at meetings and write down what they remembered later on. As a result they gained the necessary confidence to challenge the hierarchy of their own union and elected the first woman shop steward at their largely female workplace" (page 10)

Nawal El Sadawi has a strong belief that writing exposes the realities of black female experience and in so doing is a very significant tool in "killing injustice" and "killing systems that oppress". Black and Asian female writers living in Great Britain may have powerful images of what constitutes a writer - the language of a writer would be assumed to be English, the sex and class usually male and always middle class. Pratibha Parmar (1987) writes angrily about her search for female Asian writers "white academics explaining our cultures and putting forward theories about black people's lives ... I was angered by most of these books, especially when I looked for books about Asian women. These were often written by white women who were more interested in furthering their careers than representing the interests of the people they theorised about" (page 152)

There is always a danger that white researchers will reproduce a situation in which Black or Asian students are faced with a white middle class teacher who is attempting to describe to the students aspects of their everyday experience within family and school life. In order to modify this effect I tried to include as many articles written by Black and Asian female students as

possible. I also wanted to encourage the writers to see themselves as Black and Asian female writers so that they would have role models. Pratibha Parmar (1987) again "It is only in recent years, after having written articles about the lives of Asian women, young and old, when Asian women students seek me out and say how important it has been for them to read what I have written, that I realise the very real need for us as Asian women to be able to create our own theories and explanations of the world" (page 152)

In the writing sessions the groups were often drawn to writing about their relationships with their mothers. At times they wanted to write about their possible future motherhood or the problems associated with not being a mother. For girls, it would seem, femininity is strongly connected with their role as wife, mother and nurturer. In encouraging the girls to see themselves as writers I would echo Pearlle McNeill "I have often said that I write for my mother. In saying this I mean that, if years ago, my mother could have read the sort of material that I strive to write, then may be her life and mine might have been less painful" (page 134)

Narrowing the focus: Structural features  
and interactional practices

In this section I hope to expand my reasons for using ethnography as a means of obtaining data. One of the stranger features of this method of collecting research material is its attempt to reach out into the ways in which the participants make sense of their daily experience. These perceptions are crucial aspects in the formation of individual and collective consciousness. It is possible through the writings of the participants to understand how they both experience and contribute towards social processes. As a researcher and a writer within each of the writing groups I became part of the activity of writing. I acted within those groups and was able to reflect upon those activities at a distance when I analysed the material. As I attempted to understand how the everyday practices of the writers were constructed and analysed their underlying assumptions I also tried to situate those responses within structural relationships. I realised that these negotiated meanings and commonsense understandings are constructed out of highly complicated structural arrangements.

My thesis is an attempt to produce a socialist feminist ethnographic account of life within the institutions of schooling, the family and waged labour. It has a socio-economic approach but is an attempt to 'catch' everyday

accounts of how the contributors experienced and made sense of their world.

Marxists have often been associated with macroscopic perspectives whilst interactionists have been associated with microscopic investigations. I would situate my own attempts within the approaches undertaken by Sharp and Green (1975), Willis (1977) and Griffin (1985). These researchers have attempted to bridge the gap between the approaches by using process of social interpretation and linking those accounts to ideological, economic and social features of society. Interactionists sometimes dismiss macro theory because it ignores processes of social interpretation and often seems removed from our everyday experience of social life. Marxists have often criticised interactionist accounts because they have paid too much attention to individual accounts of social life, are often descriptive and unconnected to other areas of life outside schools, such as the political or economic structure.

Some interactionists Rock (1979), Hargreaves (1984), Ball (1981), Lacey (1976) have suggested that macro-theory reflects the active role that people play in the social construction of reality. They suggest that human behaviour can never be a simple product of economic forces. By examining their experience in the form of "writings" the girls may be in a position to see the structural forms of both class and patriarchal



domination which constrain and restrict access to employment and more equitable arrangements for domestic labour.

By using this method I hope to move away from certain assumptions which indicate that if we can break down stereotypical expectations of female roles girls will be in a more powerful position to gain access to higher status employment. Hartnett, Boden and Fuller (1979) and Blackstone (1985) may have been mistaken when they suggested that in order to gain access to higher status careers girls must widen their horizons. It is extremely important to examine how members experience certain aspects of their social existence, but it is a mistake to exaggerate the importance of changing individual attitudes. It is not enough to give detailed accounts of how the writers experience aspects of male domination, or what it is like to live in a one parent family. The written accounts must be placed within wider sets of economic and ideological relations.

Sharp (1981) for instance has argued that interactionists often fail to adequately examine the reasons why educational establishments are so closely related to the selection and socialisation of the future workforce. In a review which is criticising the work of Ball (1981) and of micro level sociologists Sharp writes "we learn nothing about the bourgeois class and its strategic location in a system whose logic structures the conditions in which all teachers work and pupils ...

are constrained to live out their lives. This is the reality of the social processing ... the reality of selection for the wage labour system which characterises capitalistic production and its profit seeking dynamic".

It is however not useful to simply adopt a fairly rigid explanation of how schools reproduce a stratified society by differential treatment of pupils from different social backgrounds. It is extremely important to try and establish how boys and girls are treated differently within schools, and to show how girls are prepared for distinctly different roles within family life and to try and show how class, race and gender are not separate social categories, but highly structured and complex sets of relations.

#### Why ethnography?

One of the most important aspects of my research is to examine how girls are able to unmask attempts to over identify with specific roles within the family, to challenge patriarchal relations and to 'disturb' the process of class and gender reproduction. My first task was to collect information on how the girls experienced schooling, how they related to male members of their families and how they anticipated their future lives in waged work and within family households.

In collecting the data I hoped not only to have access to the social world of a group of young women but also hoped that this process would also involve the girls in a critical analysis of the sets of social relationship in which they themselves are embedded. Mackinnon (1982) has argued that "feminism revolutionises politics". By this she implies that consciousness raising involves new forms of political practice. In consciousness raising it may be possible to reveal that women have learned to accept as normal the unequal nature of both class and gender relations. The discussions, and the availability of alternative literature written by working class women and members of ethnic minorities, together with the experience of writing together, is part of a process of unmasking forms of patriarchal and class domination.

There is however a problem with this approach as much of the material which was produced by the writers is only part of their cultural world. The process of writing involves selectivity and my own analysis of their work is affected by evaluative procedures and a commitment to social and political change. Perhaps one of the most powerful aspects of ethnographic methods is the way in which established theory can be regenerated with new evidence. As we have mentioned earlier 'reproduction theory' lacks detailed investigation at the level of classroom analysis. The "writings" help to flesh out some of the abstract and highly theoretical approaches which are associated with the political economy theorists. In this approach we see how schooling and a

stratified labour force are related. Ethnography, whilst not ignoring those relationships lays a stress on the process of how social phenomena are generated. For instance one of its objectives in relation to gender may be to analyse feminising and masculinising practices within schools and families. (Connell, Ashenden, Kessler and Dowsett (1982)). By stressing the analysis of processes we are able to observe how social interaction is generated and investigate some of the ways in which cultural knowledge is transmitted and reproduced.

It is also very important that my research will contribute evidence from the writings of the girls which will help to consolidate existing theories concerned with the reproduction of class and gender relations. It is my intention to use ethnographic material to enlarge the scope of investigation whilst committing myself to the task of encouraging women from working class and ethnic minorities to value their experiences and to record them.

In the initial stages of my research I used a method of constant comparison as suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967). I took segments of the data and noticed how they were related to other categories. By this process I was able to compare how both working class writers and middle class writers expressed their feelings about their female role within the family. Other comparisons

revealed the variations in which different classes experienced waged labour. Thus as Glaser and Strauss write "the theory develops, as different categories and their properties tend to become integrated through constant comparisons that force the analyst to make some related theoretical sense of each comparison"

But even this method of constant comparison may only produce a systematic examination of certain aspects of the everyday life and relations of a group of young female writers. We must move from the narrow focus of the detailed observation of the writers and set those experiences in wider sets of economic, ideological and patriarchal relations.

Willis (1977) when faced with the question of organising his research material decided to separate the ethnographic material from the various levels of analytical discourse. Whilst this arrangement is not only attractive it is also possible to present a coherent argument. There are weaknesses in this form of presentation as concentration on ethnographic detail can avoid the problems of analytical analysis.

My thesis then introduces some of the major theoretical analyses of the relationship between schooling and waged and domestic labour. It continues with analyses of the family household arrangement and the structure of female employment. There are also analyses of ideological formations and a discussion on the importance of

hegemonic ideologies. I have not separated the analysis from the "writings" but hope that I have been able to systematically relate the data to theoretical considerations.

Writing as a method of collecting data is not without its problems. There is a danger of treating the material as if it was an unquestionable representation of how the girls would act. Zimmerman and Wiecher (1977), Robinson (1971) and Lacey (1970) have all encouraged the participants in their research to write diaries. Lacey used this method as an extension of his primary source of data collection. He writes "the sociometric questionnaires failed to pick up the casual friendships that existed between pupils outside school and made it appear that they had no such contact ... they failed to pick up the cross-sex friendships that were established at this time" (page 100)

I think that the written accounts produced by the girls are a rich source of information which might otherwise have been unobtainable. It is however important when analysing the material to ask questions about the context in which the material is produced.

Written accounts, are also problematic. It is important when analysing the writing to ask questions about the context in which the material is produced. The girls in my study are supposedly writing for one another but it is difficult to know whether or not they are writing for

several audiences simultaneously. I had made it clear that I would be using parts of their material but had emphasised the fact that an anthology of one another's work would be available at the end of the term. Writing was meant to release the girls from inhibitions and criticism from other group members. It is difficult to know whether or not I was considered a significant audience, or to know whether (and how) the girls own selection processes operated to omit some experiences whilst emphasising others.

A large percentage of the writers came from ethnic minorities and may have produced different accounts had the facilitators been a member of their own community. A lot of the material was collected within the educational establishments which meant that the writing context was influenced by the usual constraints of an hierarchical structure of control.

It is perhaps important at this point to indicate that after the initial task of collecting the data the most significant activity was concerned with how I interpreted the writings. The written material is not evidence in itself of the ways in which girls begin to make sense of their everyday experience of life within school, youth club or family life. Nor is it possible to say that schooling processes alone have been responsible for influencing their accounts. The writings were influenced by many experiences and

"ideological messages". These forces would be difficult to isolate and are myriad in number. It is, however, interesting to note at specific points the similarity of their accounts, and the ways in which they refer to male/female antagonisms. It is especially significant when analysing their responses to authority both within the home and at school. I have attempted to relate the written accounts to wider social, economic and ideological forces and to show that there is no easy correspondence between female experience of schooling and the structure of waged employment. The writing of the thesis is a major part of the ethnographic methodology. As I examined the written accounts I became aware of the significance of the organisation of family life upon the writers. I observed both class and cultural differences in the ways in which the girls constructed future models of adulthood as workers and wives and mothers. I did not want the thesis to become a mere description of the female social world and its antagonistic relationships. This meant that I had to re-organise my approach in such a way as to examine the effects of my research procedures upon the writers. I hope that, by including their frequent references to the organisation of family life, I have expanded my analysis to include this crucial area of socialisation and reproduction.



The relationship between school processes,  
girls' writing and the culture of femininity

Reproduction theory (Althusser 1971, Bowles and Gintis 1976) although extremely helpful in the ways in which we are able to examine the relationship between schooling and the economy neglects to draw distinctions between male and female experience of social life. Nor does their work examine the domestic labour debate or the characteristics of patriarchal relations at the place of employment, within the family or within schooling. In order to address these problems I have looked closely at the structure of female employment and debates which centre around the place of domestic labour within production. I hope that I have been able to distinguish between the position that assumes that women derive their class position from their husband and the alternative view that women can be categorised as a separate and distinct class despite their relation to the means of production or their ethnic background. (Delphy 1984).

Secombe (1974), Gardiner (1975), Coulson et al (1975), Delphy (1984), Molyneux (1979), and Wajcman (1981) have suggested that when we examine the structure of gender relations it is crucial to include within our analysis an examination of the structure of the economic and social relations of the household. Family households are structured out of differing sets of social relations and may differ according to class, ethnic and cultural

background. Patriarchal relations may also vary between families and Women from different family forms may display different responses to the dominant notions of what we considered to be "appropriate" constructions of femininity, motherhood or waged employment. I have attempted to show some of the ways in which the education system is related to the sexual division of labour within the household and within the sphere of waged labour. The school is placed between the social relations of the family organisation and the social and economic relations of waged labour. (David 1980) Processes of schooling assist in the reproduction of forms of class and female consciousness which are related to economic life and the structure of gender relations within the family.

#### The culture of femininity

McRobbie (1978), Winship (1978), Lees (1986), Griffin (1985) and Frith (1987) have drawn attention to various aspects of adolescent subcultural experiences. Some of these writers have shown how ideologies of femininity are transmitted through the images of teenage magazines or school stories. Some of the images shown in magazines reflect the narrowness of female existence within the home and reproduce gender roles in highly specific images. Frith (1987) commenting upon the work of Angela McRobbie writes "Boys do, girls simply are ... to be a girl is to abide by the law, to wait passively,

to be chosen, taken, loved, rescued. To be female is also to be isolated. Women are united by their femininity but divided by jealousy and sexual competitiveness; friends, even best friends are not to be trusted, and the romantic relationship is the only relationship which matters and can provide fulfilment ... While she will almost certainly fail to meet the exacting standards men demand, she must 'work' continually, secretly, in the privacy of the home, to measure up: to disguise the faults in her appearance ... to fashion herself into the image which will secure her man"

McRobbie (1978) attempted to look at how a group of adolescent working class girls made sense of their experiences within their families, how they came to hold particular beliefs and to examine some of the characteristics of their interpersonal relationships. One of her main concerns was to link her findings to social class membership, their future position in waged and domestic labour and their economic position within the family. Equally important in her analysis was an examination of the culture of femininity.

McRobbie attempts to distinguish certain features within the girls' own culture and relate them to ideological forces within a variety of apparatus. She concludes "the culture of adolescent working class girls can be seen as a response to the material limitations imposed on them as a result of their class position, but also as

an index of, and response to their sexual oppression as women" ~~and~~

The writers in my study displayed a variety of responses to attempts to impose class and gender definitions upon them. I hope that my strategy of collecting their experiences in the form of writings has shown some of the ways in which class, race, and patriarchal power affect the construction of female consciousness. Female identity is negotiated through extremely complicated sets of economic and social relations. Lees has suggested the "mere fact of being a girl seems to a great extent to determine the way girls experience life, their class and race also contribute to their social subordination". I think that by a detailed analysis of their writings it may be possible to expose some of the mechanisms that operate and reproduce a culture of female experience. This culture is both a response to and a reflection of unequal power relations. The culture of femininity can be a means of challenge and resistance but it can also constrain and repress attempts to constrict an emotional and economically independent life.

The question remains ... what is the relationship between school processes, girls' writings and the culture of femininity? Why write? What use is the writing to the writer, and to the teacher, and researcher? An obvious reason for using writing as a method of data collection comes from the fact that it is

a more or less permanent record. easily retrievable and conveys messages over time in a way that is not possible through speech. Despite alternative such as radio, television, magazines, photographs, films and videos writing remains a 'cultural tool' which transmits ideas and messages in a very different form from speech.

When considering how to collect the data for this thesis I had to investigate a variety of methods such as interviewing, tape recording, questionnaires. I decided upon writing as I hoped the writers would be able to have a degree of control over their material, it could be altered and re-ordered which may involve a certain amount of reflection and critical analysis. There is also another dimension to the act of writing which is concerned with power relations. Historically writing has been in the hands of literate elites such as lawyers, priests, scientists, administrators and academics. Spender (1986) has shown that writing has often been controlled by men who have reproduced definitions of reality which are not only male defined but also give a hierarchical view of social relations. She writes "to construct and validate this literary canon, men of letters have checked with a select group of other men and have had their views and values confirmed; they have been commended for their discrimination, lauded for their good taste and sound judgement ... women need to consult all women, to develop an inclusive literature, if we are not to replicate the mistakes made by males"

But how are we to make connections between the process of writing and a culture of female experience? An analysis of the accounts produced by the writers will reveal in certain circumstances the ways in which gender and class come into conflict producing specific contradictions. In order to maintain hegemonic control the interests of the dominant class and sex have to attempt to conceal specific class and gender contradictions. Giddens (1979) has defined those contradictions as "principles which operate in terms of each other but at the same time contravene one another". Anyon (1983) has shown how girls attempt to resist the imposition of both class and gender identities. Her study shows how girls make active responses to sets of social contradictions. The girls make active responses to competing ideologies, which brings into conflict the gaining of self esteem and ideologies associated with what is considered as appropriate female behaviour.

The process of production itself depends upon a series of social relations which both sustain and exploit the labour force. The balance between contradictory principles is uneven and precarious. Means of production have to incorporate new technologies at the same time they must attempt to achieve a stability and cohesiveness in social relations. As Walker and Barton (1983) have explained "the cultural practices which arise under capitalism operate on a contradiction in that forms of cultural life whilst reproducing attitudes, activities and artefacts which support the

particular arrangement of the social order in which they occur also produce recognitions, reactions and responses which provide for the development of a critical and challenging stance towards that order". Women are often placed in situations which are contradictory. Acceptance of a female identity has to be negotiated through a series of conflicting pressures.

The material produced by the girls in this thesis shows how the girls experience some conflicts and how they try to negotiate a position in which they attempt to gain self esteem without endangering the approval of prospective male partners. Some of the accounts produced by the working class writers indicate that the writers are considering waged labour in the area of nursery nursing, shop keeping or in secretarial positions whilst the writers who attend the sixth form are preparing for positions as doctors, scientists and teachers. There are however important contradictions which face girls from different cultural and class backgrounds, which are associated with gaining male approval. Only one writer does not want to be in some sort of relationship with a man, preferring to make primary relationships with women.

It is difficult to establish whether class is a more dominant influence in the accounts than aspects of race and gender. Certainly the accounts written by the Black and Asian writers referred to different aspects of

family life than the working class white writers. Other aspects of their accounts united their experience as women across class and racial groups, such as the ways in which they were treated as daughters as opposed to the ways in which their brothers were treated as sons.

### Conclusion

By using writing as a means of data collection I have attempted to legitimate some of the experiences of women from both working class and middle class backgrounds. I have tried to show how the writers experience conflict within schools and the organisation of family life. Some of the ways in which the girls respond to class and gender contradictions support the dominant ideologies which influence constructions of female consciousness, some of their oppositional activity supports patriarchal relations.

I hope that the thesis will show areas where consistent patterns of responses occur, where responses differ according to class membership or cultural background. Most significantly I hope that the thesis will isolate a series of inconsistencies and contradictions which the girls encounter in their attempts to become female adults. It appears that some of the girls act in ways which often contradict the expectations of teachers, parents, and boyfriends. My research also shows that at the same time as they are controlled by attempts to socialise them into appropriate and acceptable forms of



female behaviour they frequently articulate challenges to authority and patriarchal control.

When analysing the girls' written accounts I have often relied upon critical instances in order to draw out the structural arrangements, thus setting the writings in a wider context. In using this method of analysis I hoped to place the writer within a network of social relations and socio-economic circumstances in which each writer found herself. This ensured that I was in a position to analyse the relationship between the individual and the social structure. I hoped that I was able to look at the ways in which girls from different classes and cultural backgrounds developed different social practices. In reality some of those practices were similar as the girls responded to male power relations.

It is also crucial to examine theories of labour force segmentation and the structure of female employment. The relationship between schooling and economic life must include an analysis of the ways in which women support the social relations of production by shouldering the double burden of waged and domestic labour.

The girls in my study were not aware that their experiences had much significance, nor did they imagine that their experiences could be confirmed through their

own writings. By producing an anthology of their own material I hoped to legitimate their experience and give them more control and management over their literacy skill. I also hoped that the girls would be encouraged to write for one another, sharing aspects of their femaleness which would not emerge if they were writing for a male audience or for the critical view of a teacher. By this process the girls would not be writing for the approval of the dominant class or male approval.

Patibha Parmar (1987) writes about her notion of what a writer was "he was a White man, probably bearded, sitting at his typewriter with a cigarette hanging from his mouth and drinking endless cups of coffee, and when his imagination got stuck, drinking neat Scotch, or going for long walks in the dead of night. This image captured my growing perception that you had to have white middle-class privilege to call yourself a writer". (page 150)

This thesis is not only concerned with the relationship between girls' experience of schooling, family life and economic relations, it is also an attempt to encourage girls to begin to understand those relations by the process of writing, communicating those experiences to one another and to begin to act upon those circumstances which constrain and limit their choices.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. In order to expand this point I would add that I made efforts to ensure that the girls attendance at each session was voluntary. I provided material which I thought was exciting and often unobtainable in school and public libraries. I made the classrooms in school as attractive as possible with relevant posters. The church youth club met at the home of the Deaconess where we always concluded each session with coffee and cakes. The successful pieces of writing were produced because the issues raised were attractive to the girls and highly appropriate to their circumstances.

2. Trust games enable participants to believe in their own perceptions. They attempt to untangle the power relations which characterise encounters between students and teachers. Through sharing our perceptions with others we begin to look at our own experience and attempt to formulate ideas in accordance with our own history.

Trust games can affirm and validate experience which in other situations is minimised. It gives the individual a sense of their own power. I used the trust games in order to encourage the girls to express their feelings. I hoped that writing would encourage the girls to order their feelings and come to terms with their experiences as female students who were divided by class, race and sexual orientation.

3.

This is a selection of books which I used.

"I want to write it down" Writings by Women  
in Peckham.

Published by Peckham Publishing Project  
13, Peckham High Street  
London SE15

"Elaine's Essays and Poems" by ELAINE CLAIR  
Published by  
ACER Project  
275, Kennington Lane  
London SE11

Listening Ears: Writings about the  
Educational System  
Published by  
Blackfriars Literacy Scheme

47 Nelson Square

London SE5

RUTH PARSONS "Taken for a Ride: One Women's  
View of Working on the Buses"

Published by

Centreprise Trust Ltd

136 Kingsland High Street

London E8

"As Good As We Make It" writing by

Centreprise Young Writers

Published Ibid.

BARNES JO (1979) "Arthur and Me: Docker's  
Children"

Published by

Bristol Broadsides Booklet

110 Cheltenham Road

Bristol 6

"The Last Coals of Spring" Poems, Stories and  
Songs by the Women of Easington Colliery

Published by

Durham Voices

4 Helford Road

Peterlee

Co Durham

LOUISE SHORE (1982) "Pure Running: A Life Story"

Published by

Centreprise. Op.cit.

4. D.E.S. Statistics of Education, School Leavers CSE and GCE 1983 Tables C25, C28 and C29. Welsh Joint Education Committee.

5. One of the writers' groups constituted a specific group the members of which had problems with language acquisition in a second language. They had arrived in the UK as dependent children of families already settled in the West Midlands. Some of them could write simple sentences but others had difficulty with literacy skills. The preparation for writing went well with the girls eager to discuss and take part in the preparation activities. In order to make it possible for some of the girls' contributions to be included in the anthology I asked them to tell their story through the use of a tape recorder. I then helped them to write down their accounts. I did not wish to exclude their perceptions because of their difficulty in writing in English.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Theory and reproduction

My study is concerned with the relationship between sociology, gender and education. There has been a serious failure to consider gender as a significant social division. There has been an equally serious failure to consider how education affects the experience of black women.

In their attempt to focus on class differences research in the early seventies did not conceptualise gender as a significant variable (Jackson and Marsden (1962), Douglas (1964), Holly (1965), Wakeford (1969), Douglas, Ross, Simpson (1971), Reid (1977) and MacDonald (1977b)).

It was in the mid-seventies that specific questions arose concerned with the education of girls. These questions centred around such issues as curriculum choice and university entrance, sexism in text books and the pattern of teacher-student interaction in the classroom. There was also a concern about the ways in which women occupied secondary places in the labour market. Women often found themselves having to take an unequal share of responsibility for domestic labour. Byrne (1975) attempted to show that girls were denied access to certain resources within educational establishments and this resulted in an unequal allocation of resources which disadvantaged girls.

Davies and Meighan (1975) suggested that schools, together with other socialising agencies outside educational establishments, reinforce sex stereotyping and "that all aspects of school life need to be examined, in conjunction with other educational agencies before one can say with certainty that a school was an active or passive agent in socialisation".

Specific work on the ways in which gender and racial divisions affected the educational experience of women was overshadowed by work within the interactionist approach.

Work conducted by Althusser (1971), Bowles and Gintis (1976), Bordeiu and Passeron (1977) although making important connections between educational processes and the forces of production failed to incorporate within their analysis an examination of the reproduction of gender relations or an examination of the reproduction of racism.

Althusser and Bowles and Gintis draw upon an analysis of education which concentrates upon the ways in which processes of schooling relate to the needs of production. Althusser attempts to develop a theory of ideology in which he reconceptualises the relationship between the state and ideological state apparatus. Education is seen as a dominant ideological agency reproducing "the rules of good behaviour" which are



appropriated within waged labour.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) attempted to show that by a system of selection, competition and differentiated education schools supplied a work force which corresponded to the differing levels within the work process. Individuals recognised their position in the production process as appropriate based on their experience of selection, grading, rewards by examination and by the acquisition of acceptable attitudes and behaviour.

Deem (1978, 1980), Wolpe (1974, 1977),<sup>+</sup> Sharpe (1976), were some of the earlier sociologists of education who began to collect and publish material which focussed upon the ways in which schooling affected the experience of girls in ways that were significantly different to the experience of boys. The cultural focus of the research process made gender division and its implications for women and girls a significant area of study. Feminists within the sociology of education were beginning to ask crucial questions about the subordinate position of women within the educational system.

Blackstone and Fulton (1975) in a comparison of sex discrimination amongst university teachers in America and Great Britain situated their discussion within a liberal feminist approach which blamed the women for having lower professional aspirations than men. Purvis

(1973) however, when discussing the high proportion of women in the teaching profession emphasises the cultural ideas which relate to the role of women rather than employing a "deficiency model" of female failure.

Other feminists (Mitchell (1971), Kuhn and Wolpe (1978), Rowbotham (1973), Sharpe (1976), Barrett (1980), and David (1978, 1980 and 1985)) took a specific interest in the ways in which women's domestic role benefitted the capitalist production process. They were also interested in the ways in which women's domestic labour benefitted male members of the family.

It became increasingly obvious that any future analysis of the school must also include within its investigation an examination of the reproduction of class and gender identity. Areas such as childcare, socialisation, domestic labour and mothering became areas of investigation. Questions were asked about the ways in which education contributed to the maintenance of the sexual division of both waged and domestic work. Considerable importance was placed on the role of schooling in the reproduction of both class and gender relations. (Arnot (1980, 1981a, 1981b, 1981, 1982), Barrett (1980), Branson and Miller (1979), David (1980), Deem (1978), Kelly and Nihlen (1982), Wolpe (1978)).

Although this work had enormous significance in its attempt to advance theoretical concepts it was not

supported by much micro-analysis. Madeleine Arnot (1982) writes "cultural analysis concentrates upon 'how' rather than 'why' schools function to reproduce the patterns of gender inequality - the focus is therefore upon internal rather than external processes. The origin of these processes lies in the concept of "sex role ideology" yet paradoxically, this ideology is also produced and reproduced in the school"

Arnot (1984) has tackled the complex issues of attempting to integrate into her analysis the relationship between schooling and the construction of family life. In an attempt to develop a perspective which is feminist and includes a revised political economy of education Arnot writes "the standard theories are also deficient in the way they pose the relationship of the family to mass schooling and, more significantly, the relationship between class and gender in both the family and the school"

Barrett and MacIntosh (1982) have shown that the ideology of familism permeates every corner of social existence and the idealised notion of the nuclear family functions in such a way as to reproduce and maintain a series of unequal sets of relationships. Schools often reproduce a series of class and gender relationships which are patterns of experience which exist within families.

Sociologists working within a perspective which is both Marxist and feminist have attempted to show some of the ways in which sociologists have tried to conceptualise the relationship between schooling and class and gender reproduction. Masculine and feminine identities are constructed out of unequal sets of relations both within schools and within families. Girls seem to be faced with a series of contradictions out of which they have to "make sense" of what it means to "be female".

If it is acknowledged that girls draw upon specific values and traditions of their class position and that these cultural patterns often determine differential rates of involvement in the formal educational system, we must also specifically examine the ways in which class, race and gender affect the experience of girls within schooling.

At least half of the girls in this study came from families whose parents were born in the Caribbean, Pakistan or Punjab. These girls not only had to cope with the reproduction of class and gender relations within the classroom and within the family but their educational and social life was determined by racism.

Mullard (1983) has pointed out that it should be noted that all official accounts and recent reports see the question of the education of ethnic minorities as one of racial disadvantage and not a situation in which racism has become institutionalised.

Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe (1985) have directed our attention towards how first generation black students experienced hostility from teachers.

Amos and Parmar (1981) have shown us the ways in which Asian girls are continually subjected to stereotypically perceived notions of arranged marriages which are considered by white teachers as inappropriate and problematic. It is of crucial importance that we take into account the specific circumstances which contribute to the form of family life experienced by the black and Asian girls in this study. It is important to conceptualise the family as a set of social relations with each member attempting to negotiate a position within the unit. The girls, in their writings, have referred to their parents' influence upon their lives. Whilst it is important to consider the differences which exist between parental attitudes of both middle and working class parents, it is also important to isolate both racial and cultural forms of family life, together with the added dimension of structural racism and the operation of patriarchal power relations.

In the introduction to this chapter I have attempted to introduce the reader to a series of arguments and theories which have informed current debates on the reproduction of class, gender and race issues. I have drawn special attention to the relationship between the organisation of family life and certain processes which

occur within schooling. The next section of the chapter will concentrate upon developing these perspectives and illustrating my own position by examples drawn from the girls' writing.

#### The work of Louis Althusser and Bowles and Gintis

In "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus" Althusser (1971) attempts to develop a general theory of ideology which is connected with Marxist theories of the state. He sees education as the dominant ideological state apparatus in a mature capitalist social formation. Althusser moves away from a crude correspondence theory between the base and super-structure demonstrating the specific function of both ideological and repressive agencies. He highlights the way in which these apparatus function in order to assist the state in maintaining hegemonic control.

The repressive state apparatus which includes agencies of the state such as the legal system, the police and the army and government and the civil service, intervene on behalf of the ruling class in the class struggle. Althusser (1971) argues "no class can hold state power over a long period without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and in the ideological state apparatuses".

It is important to examine Althusser's reconceptualisation of the notion of ideology as this has

implications for our interest in developing a feminist account of the reproduction of social relations. Although the repressive state apparatus primarily functions by repression they are also supported by ideological forces. Similarly the ideological state apparatuses function predominately by ideology but they ultimately may have to depend upon repressive forces. To illustrate this point Althusser (1971) argues "thus the schools and churches use suitable methods of punishment, expulsion, selection to discipline not only their shepherds, but also their flocks. The same is true of the family.... the same is true of the cultural ISA (censorship, amongst other things)" (page 138)

We have already noted that education is a central agency through which the ruling ideology is transmitted. Ideology ensures that schools are seen as neutral environments and that schools are establishments which operate within a democratically organised society. Schools teach skills which are appropriate for the future occupation of the child. The school also plays a part in teaching the rules of good behaviour which will be utilised later within waged labour. Labourers may learn resignation and submissiveness whilst managers and owners are likely to learn skills appropriate to their position within the economic order. Althusser's main comments upon education relate to the ways in which ideology is related to reproduction and how social order is maintained in capitalist societies.

In analysing the ways in which education is related to the reproduction of the productive forces Althusser argues that in order to exist every social formation "must reproduce the conditions of production at the same time as it produces" (page 124) .

The school is a central agency by which, ideologically, students are prepared to reproduce the necessary conditions for production. Those conditions must include reproduction of productive forces such as land, plant, labour, capital and a variety of forms of knowledge and skills. The family, together with the school are places where the material reproduction of labour power occurs. Skills and competence and the subjection of labour power to the ruling ideology are also transmitted through schooling.

He writes "some children will thus be prepared for their future role as the exploited, with an apolitical, national, ethical or civic consciousness. Others will learn how to give orders and enforce obedience, in expectation of their future role as agents of exploitation (employers, managers) or agents of repression (police, army). The third major category will acquire the ability to manipulate ideologies and forms of consciousness" (page 19) .



Althusser (1971) argues that our productive practices are so integrated into our everyday consciousness that it is very difficult to see those practices as part of a reproductive cycle. We are able to unmask our taken for granted assumptions about our "everyday productive practice" and see the ways in which they are related to the forces of production. In their selective processes schools ensure that different amounts of knowledge are transmitted to different children on the basis of their class origin. This process also ensures the acquisition of specific and particular ideological dispositions which has implications for not only the reproduction of forms of femininity and masculinity but also for the reproduction of racism.

One of the main criticisms of Althusser's work is the fact that we are asked to analyse the specific relationship between production and political, juridical and ideological forms in such a way as to grasp simultaneously the "determination of the economic in the last instance" and the relative autonomy and effectiveness of the educational apparatus. Hargreaves (1982) in an analysis of Althusser's work suggests that there is a fundamental weakness in a theory which is relatively autonomous from the economic base. Althusser's position is over determined by the economic base and denies the possibility of transformation. The notion of relative autonomy of schooling simultaneously supports existing patterns of social relations and gives

opportunities for resistance. It finally comes to an argument concerned with the degree to which schools support or interrupt the reproduction of capitalist social relations.

Another criticism directed towards Althusser is concerned with his over functionalist approach to the relationship between schooling and the economy. He emphasises the successful socialisation of students into the existing social order. The functionalist aspects of Althusser's work assumes that education is successful in its attempts to socialise and legitimate existing social arrangements. There is a failure to conceptualise change other than by using the most revolutionary methods.

The most significant criticism of Althusser's work is the complete neglect of the capitalist social formations need to integrate in its process the economic and social subordination of women. Althusser does not recognise the ways in which schools transmit highly specific definitions of masculine and feminine identity. Nor does he recognise the reproduction of racist and sexist practices which occur across class categories. There is also a failure to incorporate the social relations of family life with processes of schooling in such a way as to isolate the operation of patriarchal power relations.

The political economy of education: the work of  
Samuel Bowles and Hubert Gintis

Bowles and Gintis (1976), reacting against the idealism of Illich (1971) and the pessimism of Althusser, attempt to develop a notion of a political economy of education. The central argument of their thesis is "different levels of education feed workers into different levels within the occupational structure and correspondingly, tend towards an internal organisation comparable to levels in the hierarchical division of labor" (page 132)

The imperatives of profit often pull the education system in different directions. Schools are at the mercy of the capitalist enterprise as they are required to reproduce, not only differentially educated personnel, but are also required to supply a work force which is attitudinally appropriate in order to reproduce the social relations of production. Bowles and Gintis (1976) suggest that workers, as a result of being involved in capitalist production processes, become increasingly alienated from the more humanising process of social life. It seems as if workers are unable to gain control of their circumstances. The education system assists in this process of "pre-alienation" by the use of intelligence quotients. Students become aware of the ideology of competition, rewards, certification and systems of assessment of intelligence.

They come to accept and internalise the school's assessment of their ability and it is possible to see how the principle of alienation occurs within schooling. The implications of this argument seem to be that by pre-alienating students from potential disruption the school has secured a compliant work force. This depends upon whether or not the student accepts the school's assessment of him or herself.

Part of the correspondence theory suggests that the amount of labour, the type of labour and the relations of employment are determined within the education system. The education system is also organised in such a way as to correspond to the hierarchical division of labour within production.

As with Althusser when criticising the work of Bowles and Gintis it is impossible not to avoid responding to the highly functionalist approach which characterises their analysis. The tight correspondence between the economy and educational processes suggests that inequalities within the education system are an effect of inequalities in the economy. In other words the needs of the economy determine the nature and organisation of schooling. Economic inequalities determine educational inequalities.

Demaine (1981) and Hussaine (1976) argue that the simple mechanical relationship between schooling and the economy cannot be conceptualised in such a deterministic

way. Hussain (1976) argues that individuals cannot enter occupations that do not exist. In a situation of unemployment there may be an overall balance between vacancies and unemployment but a lack of correspondence between the types of work available and the geographical location of specific sorts of work and skills required. The education system cannot directly intervene in this supply and demand situation. The form of organisation within the education system cannot be directly associated with the organisation of production processes. Schools are subjected to political, legal and cultural constraints which may mean that the transition from school to employment is very uneven.

Bowles and Gintis (1981) substantially revise their earlier work admitting that their previous analysis neglected the existence of contradiction between education and the economy. Their most serious failure occurred at the level of the relationship between the base and the super-structure, giving little autonomy to other institutions. Their revised position would suggest that the process of reproduction can be hindered by movements that occur in other sectors of society. Society is conceptualised as "an ensemble of structurally articulated sites of social practice". They suggest that the state, the family and capitalist production form "a contradictory totality". Bowles and Gintis (1976) fail to incorporate within their analysis an adequate understanding of the ways in which boys and girls are selectively prepared for a position within the

home and at the place of work. They fail to analyse the detail of sexual segmentation within the structure of employment. Women are situated in low paid low status sectors of the labour force and as West (1982) and Westwood (1984) have shown, women often have to respond to the directives of male managers and supervisors. In schools boys and girls are prepared simultaneously for the same class position but within those class divisions girls are often prepared to accept unproblematically a hierarchy of male over female. Correspondence theory fails to address the fact that in preparing for adulthood girls are continually reminded of their female responsibilities within the family.

Althusser and Bowles and Gintis make significant contributions to our understanding of the relationship between the economy and schooling. It is regrettable that they fail to incorporate within their analysis the social organisation of the family household and the ways in which patriarchal forms of organisation affect girls within the family, school and within waged labour.

#### The reproduction of conflict

At the turn of the decade some sociologists of education turned their attention to a less deterministic approach to the relationship between the state, education and the economy. Apple (1982), Anyon (1981, 1983), Giroux (1980, 1981, 1983) began to examine existing practices

in such a way as to suggest that education was relatively autonomous from the forces of production. Apple (1982) indicated "no assemblage of ideological practices and meanings and no set of social and economic arrangements can be totally monolithic" (page 8)

These writers present us with a more optimistic view of schooling. They are concerned with the possibility of creative responses from the students. Oppositional instances become the ground upon which teachers and students are able to transform existing power relations. Giroux is interested in a theory which will not only explain the reproduction of class relations but will also incorporate strategies for educational and social change.

In the following accounts it can be seen that not all the girls in my study are prepared to accept a working class female job together with an acceptance of specific male and female roles within the family. In the first account the writer anticipates a low paid traditionally female position. She also accepts the hierarchy of a male manager and the additional responsibility of household management.

Life as a secretary

7.30 am	Wake up, tidy up, wash and get dressed.
8.00 am	Have breakfast, make my face, wash dirty breakfast dishes, go to work.
9.15 am	Reach work, got to the boss's room and collect the day's work, give messages, make phone calls. Start working.
11.00 am	Carry on doing the work given, answer phone calls, make arrangements with important people to see the boss.
12.00 noon	Dinner time, go to the canteen with friends, eat dinner, talk, sometimes go for a walk. Do outside jobs for the boss.
3.00 pm	Go to the bank for the boss, post all the mail, get some orders for him, go to work and carry on with the work. Have a cup of tea and make some for the boss.
4.00 pm	Try and complete all the work that was given, tidy my office desk, then tidy the boss's desk and ask permission to leave.



4.30 pm            Go round talking to mates, say goodbye  
and go home.

5.00 pm            Have some tea, make a list of things,  
then go shopping.

5.20 pm            Complete doing shopping, come home and  
take a break. Then start cooking.

6.00 pm            Have a meal, tidy the house up, have a  
bath and watch television. "Getting It  
Together" (page 34) (1).

This writer shows how the authority structures of school are correspondingly anticipated within the world of the office. This is particularly revealing in the way in which she asks permission to leave the office. There are similarities in the ways in which structures of authority, power and control operate within both areas of social life. It is also obvious that she is prepared to take on shopping, cooking and cleaning.

My second account is quite different and shows how some forms of cultural response actively contradicts expected female behaviour. In the following account a white middle class girl describes a situation in which she is offered a better paid job than her boyfriend. She is faced with making an important decision.

"It was suggested to me that we lived together in order to have a realistic understanding of our relationship. We both earned more or less the same salary and had enquired about a joint mortgage. We had already sought contraceptive advice and owned our own transport. We were all set to face a different experience when I was offered a job in Edinburgh. I was stunned when I got the job and didn't really know what to think - I'd applied for it ages ago - it seemed a good job and with a better salary; but I'd practically forgotten about it.

For several days I went around in a dazed depression. Luckily my boyfriend was pre-occupied with a matter at the time so he didn't really notice my mood.

About a week later I couldn't face the confusion any more and I knew that I wasn't going to come up with a solution myself so I somehow explained things to my boyfriend. What reaction I expected I'm not really sure but definitely not the one I got. He was furious that I could even think of accepting the offer - since we'd got our plans sorted out I should stick to them just as he was going to and not go charging up to Scotland. I was quite hurt at this total rejection of the job and his refusal to listen to the advantages it held for me; but I might have listened to him if it had not slipped out that he objected to me getting a higher salary than him.

This really angered me - I had every right to at least consider the job, especially since our plans were only in our minds - we hadn't actually got our mortgage and we were not actually getting married. So since he wasn't prepared to enter into a firm commitment, I wasn't going to wait for him.

I signed the contract for the job and got ready for my new life and new relationships in Edinburgh" (page 129) (2).

Both the boy and the girl in this account are obviously reproducing their class position by entering into a professional career. As Giroux (1980) suggests when we begin to isolate some of the contradictions and tensions that occur within expected responses and behaviours we have to develop a more complicated analysis than those presented by the correspondence theorists. The writer in the account is challenging the notion that men earn more than women and is going to prioritize her career over her partnership. Giroux (1980) would see these contradictions as important areas of resistance and transformation. In this account the writer is challenging the operation of patriarchal power relations. Giroux refers to a theory of class reproduction in which socio-cultural responses would be seen as actively confronting and contradicting class based organised curricula. I hope to use and extend his analysis to include an examination of the ways in which cultural responses are generated within family, place of

work, youth clubs as well as educational establishments. Within these cultural settings I hope that it will be possible to isolate patterns of resistance and points of dissonance as the girls encounter dominant ideological features specific to each institutions.

Any knowledge that is produced and concerned with the everyday experiences of the classroom, the nature of school texts or the organisation of the classroom must reveal to the researcher how knowledge itself can be distorted in the interests of the dominant ideology. It is not enough to know that things are unequal we must ask "questions concerning how structural determinants in the wider society function to sustain and uphold forms of knowledge and modes of reasoning that mystify the nature of social reality" (page 238)

By observing educational strategies we are able to assess the possibilities and limitations of differing forms of resistance. Willis (1977) has pointed towards the structure and content of the informal counter culture of working class lads. McRobbie (1978) whilst looking at the ways in which a group of working class girls developed an anti-school culture claims to have discovered a basic continuity between this culture and the culture of their parents. We must ask to what extent cultural forms of opposition can be considered effective in challenging existing social arrangements. It may be possible to identify forms of resistance but

problematic to analyse their significance. Giroux (1981) proposes that instead of primarily concentrating upon cultural reproduction we should begin to imagine more radical approaches to intervention and social action. A "teaching ideology" can seem far removed from the everyday practice of teaching. The realities of teacher/student interaction are conditioned by the physical and political conditions of the teaching context. The conditions under which teachers perform often reinforce deep seated and unrecognised prejudices.

The work of Giroux shows us that school life is not totally dominated by the wider economic and social systems and that schools are sites for ideological struggle between competing ethnic, religious, racial and class groups. Giroux recognises that reproduction not only serves the interests of the controlling group but also reproduces conflict and resistance. Beyond the deterministic theory of correspondence there are possibilities for a transformed and radical theory of reproduction.

#### Gaining consent: the work of Antonio Gramsci

Giroux (1980) suggests that schools play a contradictory role in reproducing the social order. He points out that the workplace, family and the school are places of tension and conflict where the reproduction of social relations are not easily achieved.

The work of Antonio Gramsci (1971) shows that the ruling class maintain control by coercion through repressive forms controlled by the state. Hegemony is also achieved through ruling by consent. Gramsci suggests that dominant ideologies are transmitted and reproduced in such a way as to mystify or conceal existing power relations. This notion of hegemony is extremely helpful to sociologists of education as it has very important consequences when we attempt to look at structures of knowledge and how they are related to the economy. This of course also has significant implications for the ways in which girls and women come to accept socially constructed forms of female identity. Horney (1967) has written "at any given time the more powerful side will create an ideology suitable to help maintain its position and to make this position acceptable to the weaker one. In this ideology the differentness of the weaker one will be interpreted as inferiority and it will be proven that these differences are unchangeable, basic, or God's will. It is the function of such an ideology to deny or conceal the existence of a struggle"

It is interesting to notice in the writings of certain girls how they come to reproduce the conditions of their own subordination. One girl writes about motherhood "The best thing about having children is loving each other. This way people can express their love to each other. Also when the husband is at work you won't be alone. Children bring happiness into life and expand

the family. And when the man and woman have a fight the children are usually there to give comfort. Also less fights occur between two people, but sometimes it is vice versa. Dressing, taking the child for walks is fun. Teaching the child is also fun and interesting. You can learn a lot about yourself" (page 20) (3).

We can see from this example that the writer has come to accept certain social arrangements in which she is unaware of the affects that motherhood will have upon her capacity to earn wages and her role in relation to domestic labour and male approval. In schools we may easily give credibility to a notion that associates girls with the area of domestic life and boys to the area of waged labour. If we accept this relation as a natural and normal form we are denying the reality of the ways in which class, race and gender relations are tied to economic structures, patriarchal power relations and institutional racism.

Dominant ideology often legitimates the form of gender and class relations in such a way that unequal relations are seen to be the limit of our commonsense understandings. Gramsci's understanding of 'commonsense' helps us to unravel everyday experiences which are seen as inevitable or 'normal states of affairs' and reveal the material basis of those understandings. Raymond Williams (1977) illustrates the point.

"It is a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our mould. It is a lived system of meanings and values - constitutive and constituting - which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming... It is, that is to say, in the strongest sense a 'culture' but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes" (page 110)

Certain practices are considered legitimate for transmission whilst other practices are neglected. For the feminist researcher, Gramsci's notion of hegemony becomes particularly apposite. We are in a position to ask how do schools and families assist in the reproduction and transmission of the dominant culture? The transmission of a dominant culture is dependent upon a specific form of socialisation within the family. The dominant culture is also shaped by an acceptance of the particular organisation of work practices. The success of white male bourgeois hegemony is dependent upon society accepting social and economic relations as inevitable and unchangeable. As sociologists we are in a position to analyse the ways in which schools perform vital functions in the creation of the conditions necessary for ideological hegemony to be maintained.



Stuart Hall (1980) clarifies Gramsci's notion of hegemony. "The position attributes the fundamental determination in securing a "complex unity" of society to the relationships of the economic structure, but regards the so called "super structures" as having vital crucial 'work' to do in sustaining, at the social, cultural, political and ideological levels, the conditions which enable capitalist production to proceed. Furthermore, it regards the super structures as having the role, above all, of drawing society into 'conformity' with the long term requirements and conditions of a capitalist economic system ... this is regarded as difficult contested work that operates through opposition and antagonism ... the economic system cannot ensure all the conditions necessary for its own expanded reproduction .... creating an order of society around the fundamental economic relationships is just as necessary as production itself; the relations of production alone cannot 'produce' such a social order. The relationship is not one of correspondence but of coupling .... the coupling of two distinct, but interrelated and inter-dependent spheres. The nature of the coupling is described in Gramsci's phrase, the structure/super structure complex ... we may call this the paradigm of hegemony" (15).

But we must ask how does hegemony function within schools and how are schools related to economic life and the social relations of family life? It is important to

establish how aspects of dominant cultural experience are classified as high or low status and to analyse how some behaviour in the classroom is accepted as normal for all students whilst other forms of interaction are controlled by class association or by gender.

Schools can be caught in conflicts not of their own making. They may find themselves at one and the same time assisting in the creation of the conditions necessary for capitalist accumulation as well as maintaining a supposedly democratic organisation of schooling. Schools attempt to hold these contradictions together. But schools are not only sites of ideological and social reproduction. Hegemony is related to all the major areas of social existence. There are ideologies associated with production, the cultural world of the performing arts and the media, ideologies of the family, education and sexuality. There are also ideologies of the state, civil rights, the police and the legal system. Although the dominant ideology exists in all these institutions they are struggled over and competing ideologies are always at work.

Although there is a persistent movement to achieve an ideological hegemony within a school which will assist in the production of conditions which are necessary for the reproduction of capitalist social relations there will be variations in the amount of control that is

achieved. Situations may arise where students are capable of resisting the imposition of class, racial and gender identities, even though the resistance has taken place within the boundaries of dominant ideological controls.

In the following account I feel that I would be adventurous to suggest that the writer was resisting the imposition of specific ideological relations. I do feel, however, that she displays a sensitivity to the attitudes of other Asian boys and her brother which would have repercussions within the family. She is also aware of a lack of support with travel arrangements for a recently appointed member of staff. She writes "my life in HNR as a girl is mostly exciting. I would love to come to school dressed in jeans, trousers and jacket. I would like to tease some of my friends and try to make them laugh but sometimes I get fed up with them and wished that I had new ones. I am a little shy to talk to the boys who I like very much. I think that girls normally dress nicer than boys and are more mature at the age of fifteen. I hate my brother in this school because if I talk to the boys he tells my mum and I get into trouble. I like to wear earrings, necklaces, bangles and make-up but when the tutor or the Head comes into the classroom I have to hide myself so that I don't get into trouble in front of the boys then the boys will tease me and this makes me angry. I like my friends to be exciting and mess around and not to be snobs or think

that they are "IT" because it makes me feel left out. In every school you will mostly find the Head as being a man, and the Deputy as being a lady. Mostly the men always get the high jobs and the women get second choice. In our school our Head of Maths is a lady, mostly in other schools it is a man. If a teacher is new and she hasn't got a car then she might have to walk down to the annexe because the teachers don't know her or because they don't know that she is going to the annexe" (page 6) (4).

This account does reveal that processes of reproduction do not occur without reproducing conflict and contradiction. It is at those points that teachers, parents and students can become active agents in negotiating and redefining hegemonic ideologies. Gramsci insists that new institutions and new forms of economic relations will themselves create new forms of consciousness.

Hegemony describes a situation in which education and other institutions, together with ideologies and the lived culture come together in an attempt to ensure that commonsense knowledge conforms to the needs of production, the gaining of consent and the reproduction of the social order. Central to the notion of hegemony is a concern for counter-hegemonic activity. Johnson (1979) has commented upon some of the difficulties involved in achieving hegemonic control, "reproduction is here presented as a hired and constantly resisted

labour, a political and ideological work for capital and for the dominant classes, on very obstinate materials indeed".

When analysing the girls' writings it is possible to see the tensions which exist between the economic, political and cultural forces which affect the ways in which girls perceive themselves in social situations. If we are to examine how the girls make sense of their everyday experiences we may also be in a position to unravel such notions as femininity, motherhood, domesticity, wife and mother. It may be possible to gain insights into how some girls conform to stereotypical forms of female behaviour, others challenge the imposition of class, gender and racial categories, whilst others struggle to gain a measure of survival amidst the contradictions.

#### A feminist analysis of class and gender relations

Previous writers have been attempting to relate educational processes to the needs of capitalist economy. Most of this work has been concerned with the reproduction of class relations with very little understanding of the ways in which male hegemony attempts within the home, school and work place to "win over" each generation to particular definitions of male and female relations.

To be effective women have to be persuaded to accept as natural the hierarchy of male over female and the "natural" superiority of men in the family and at the place of work. Hegemony is achieved by consent rather than force and schools are a primary agency through which consciousness about social reality is shaped. It is therefore essential that schools become the focus of any feminist analysis of the reproduction of gender relations. That analysis must attempt to isolate the ways in which class, race and gender are often brought into contradictory relations.

Our discussions on hegemony have shown us that capital never entirely succeeds in creating classed, racially typed and sexed subjects. Hegemony also refers to the extent and the way in which 'commonsense' is moulded to the needs of production. The requirements not only of the dominant economic class are satisfied by a particular hegemony. Definitions of masculinity and femininity are the product of both patriarchal and class relations, male hegemony being negotiated through different class experiences.

Feminists have made a variety of attempts at examining the ways in which gender relations have been structured. Eisenstein (1979), Kuhn and Wolpe (1978) and MacDonald (1980, 1981) have concentrated upon the ways in which schooling has contributed to recreating the conditions necessary for the maintenance of a sexual division of labour within production and within the home. MacDonald

commenting upon the subordination of women writes "schooling produces both classed and sexed subjects who are to take this place in the social division of labour structured by the dual, yet often contradictory forces of class and gender. We must recognise the ways in which schooling constricts, modifies and transmits specific definitions of gender within and across the boundaries" (page 13) (11)

In order to illustrate this point I have selected two passages from the girls' writings which indicate the ways in which class membership, cultural patterns, selective education and the search for male approval affect girls who are the same age and live five miles apart.

The first account is written by a sixteen year old white middle class girl who attends a single sex selective Grammar School.

"We both earned more or less the same salary and had enquired about a joint mortgage. We were all set to face a different experience when Geoff was offered a job in Edinburgh. I was not prepared to give up my job which was very important to me. I was doing well within the job and felt it unlikely that I would find another job which would mean an increase in salary or satisfy me so much if I were to follow Geoff to Edinburgh.

Geoff however was keen to take up the job which would mean an increase in salary and we spent a long time discussing the various possibilities. In the end we decided to live separately again for the short term with Geoff following his job while I remained in mine. We still would meet at weekends. This did not work out and I was continually feeling under pressure to give up my job. In the end I was forced to give up my job to follow him and spent a long time looking for a new job" (page 130) (5).

Despite the fact that the writer, when anticipating her future, saw herself as a professional wage earner, earning a reasonable salary and with job satisfaction, she inevitably thought that she would sacrifice a salary in order to follow her male partner. The writer, to a certain degree had challenged the notion of an association primarily with domestic life. The decision to join her partner however meant that for a time she would be financially dependent upon him. It also revealed that her identity was connected with a relationship with a man despite the possibility of a reasonably independent financial life in her present job.

It is not easy to make a direct correspondence with the ways in which certain educational processes contribute to the continuing subordination of girls by associating women with family life. It is, however, possible to isolate the writer's emotional dependence upon a male



partner and show the ways in which male bourgeois hegemony operates.

Chris Griffin (1985) writing about the differences between 'middle class' and 'working class' jobs exposes the myth that young people have choices about their future employment. She writes "apart from the academic elite in the sixth forms, who stood a better chance of making a real career choice, most prospective school leavers had to consider the demands of the education system and the job market" (page 29) (21).

Some girls do challenge the centrality of marriage and partnership as a primary location for women.

In the following account I would like to show how an Asian female writer from a working class background attempts to make sense of her experience of schooling. The account indicates the ways in which girls are placed in a series of social relationships which act in a contradictory way. It is left to the writer to gain a measure of control over these forces. She writes anticipating her future. "When I'm twenty years old I'll be probably married and living with my husband and his family if they're here. If I'm not married I'll be still working and earning money for my wedding. I would like to marry a boy who I know, but from a different country. But before I do get married I would like to do a course on nursery nursing. The place I'm

looking forward to go to get married is Singapore which is in Malaysia" (page 106) (6).

It can be seen in this account that the writer sees two quite distinct areas of her adult life. Her waged labour or preparation for waged labour, will definitely be part of a pre-marriage arrangement and the financial reward will go towards a preparation for partnership in the form of a marriage contract. The writer has accepted that as a female she will have a specific role within marriage. It is hard to establish whether or not the process of schooling has been antagonistic towards her possibly marrying a man who is living in another country who she has not met. Her peers will certainly have talked a great deal about their futures as wives and the process of selection of possible partners.

I would like to comment on these two accounts to point out the different ways in which schooling has prepared the writers for waged labour. One certainly would have greater choice over a career, university education, and financial independence. However, in comparison with boys from their own class they would experience schooling in distinctly different ways. It must also be pointed out that although boys' education will primarily focus on training or preparation for paid employment, the newly arrived Asian husband will be disadvantaged in terms of gaining employment in Great Britain and the girl may be the member of the partnership who is able to

have access to employment.

Marriage partnership, being seen in relation to male approval is part of the process of becoming an adult female person in both of these accounts. I do not wish to isolate the experience of one class against another, or one racial group as opposed to another but rather to point out that class membership, cultural background and male hegemony shape the ways in which girls experience schooling and the ways in which they anticipate waged and domestic labour.

As boys and girls are prepared for employment boys have a relatively close relationship with production whilst girls are educated simultaneously for paid employment and domestic life.

Perhaps one of the most important contributions that feminist analysis can contribute to the debate lies within an examination of ideological determinants, such as the reproduction of heterosexuality, motherhood, housework and ideological constructs of femininity. Madeleine Arnot (1982) in an attempt to describe gender inequality in education, the home and the work place insists that "we need to go further and analyse in depth the processes of the production of gender differences both inside and outside schools, and to analyse the forms of gender reproduction which are inherent in, and not independent of the patterns of class reproduction, class control and class struggles"

One of the most important contributions of the feminist analysis of class and gender relations has been concerned with the ways in which schooling has directed girls towards domesticity assuring capital of a supply of cheap, often unskilled, and plentiful part-time labour.

An examination of patriarchal power relations has also shown the ways in which patriarchal relations in the family are connected with the social relations of production. We are now in a position to investigate how class and gender relations are structured through a division of labour in waged and domestic labour. We can also establish the relationship between ideological constructions of female consciousness and how these are connected to constructions of masculine superiority.

Whilst sociologists of education have attempted to look at the relationship of schooling, gender and class they have overlooked racial divisions in the relation of education and class. The next section of this chapter seeks to investigate the ways in which schools have reproduced not only class relations but also a structure of unequal relations between white students and black students. Within this analysis it is essential to include the specific experience of black female students as these have not been sufficiently addressed by either male or feminist accounts of the reproduction of class and gender within schooling.

### The reproduction of class, race and gender

Feminists when examining the ways in which schooling is related to the reproduction of gender and class relations have neglected to include in their analysis the specific experience of black women and black girls. All black women occupy a subordinate position as they are subjected to racial and sexual categorisation. In some ways racism and sexism can be defined in similar ways. Sets of beliefs and assumptions about a section of the population which sets them apart by attributing significance to either biological or racial characteristics may deny those groups access to material resources. The roots of racism and sexism are situated within the structure of power relations. All white people, whether affluent or low paid, benefit from their collective position vis a vis the black community. Black women are not only subjected to discriminatory practices but are also subjected to sets of social relations in which they are subordinate to white working class women and to both white and black men of all classes. Racism has affected the type of job, type of housing and type of schooling which is available to black girls.

All the black girls in the study were located within inner city schools situated in Handsworth; all came from working class backgrounds. The white working class

girls attended a youth club on a small council estate on the city boundary; all came from working class backgrounds.

Some black female students experience isolation and alienation in their response to the authority structure of schools and a Euro-centrally based curriculum. Here is part of one girl's account which indicates the anxiety she experiences as an Asian girl. It particularly highlights her fear about her femininity which is closely associated with her ethnicity... "when some of the teachers start to care about other children I feel hurt. Is it because I'm Asian or because I'm not pretty like the other girls I wonder?" (page 1) (7).

Bryan, Dadzie and Scafe (1985), Amos and Parmar (1981), Swann (1981) and Stone (1981) have directed our attention to the ways in which first generation black children experienced hostility and cruelty. These accounts suggest that it is the attitudes of teachers that are responsible for the most lasting damage. It is important to see how racist processes within schools reproduce a structure in which black women are disadvantaged. There is evidence to show that teachers and students continue to belittle cultural difference and 'make strange' unusual hair styles, clothing and differences in language. One particular form of sexual control which affects Asian girls particularly centres around marriage arrangements. White teachers make

assumptions about the appropriateness of particular marriage patterns which are based upon an assumed superiority of 'so called' choice of marriage partners. Amos and Parmar (1981) point out that marriage between white members of the community are restricted by a variety of class and geographical factors and that 'choice', 'arrangements' and 'freedom' are all relative concepts.

Black and Asian girls are subjected to bourgeois definitions of their place in the family. The ideal being represented by a white middle class nuclear family. In this way girls are given a model of motherhood in an attempt to control or constrain what are considered to be irresponsible attitudes towards motherhood. This is particularly applicable to girls who want to have children outside marriage.

Consistently black girls, together with white working class girls, have been placed in schools which not only employ sexist practices but also transmit sets of values, beliefs and forms of knowledge which assume a Euro-centric superiority. The history, cultural values and belief system of Europe and America are considered superior to those of any other culture. It must also be noted that school curricula are based not only on white, male defined assumptions about the organisation of 'knowledge', they are also deeply embedded in bourgeois notions of what is considered to be superior knowledge.

The girls write very vividly about their relationships with their teachers, referring continually to the various forms of control which they feel restrict their life in school. Some of those writings reflect the depth of feeling which the writers have experienced when responding to the behavioural and academic expectations of their teachers. Here is a selection of their responses "at lower school I did not get on well with my teachers. The thing I hate about school is getting up, home-work, teachers telling people off and being sent home to change my clothes" (page 2). Another writes about a teacher "a very bad tempered man, who always seems to have a red face. Every time you see him he gives you the creeps. Seems very lazy because he always sends some-one to get his dinner, and he nearly always wears the same red tie" (page 8). Another writes "the worst thing about school are that the teachers are on one side of the barrier and the pupils are on the other" (page 47) (8).

I do not of course wish to imply that issues of authority, power and control are confined to one class or one gender. I wish rather to isolate those responses which are particular to the experience of black and Asian working class girls.

As girls come in contact with a variety of processes within schooling they bring to those experiences 'lessons learned' within their families. In order to



deepen our understanding of the ways in which processes of schooling and the organisation of family life assist in the reproduction of class and gender relations we need to include the perspectives of the girls. The girls, in their writings, have referred to their parents' influence upon their lives. It is important to consider the differences which exist between parental attitudes of both middle and working class parents. Racial differences need to be incorporated into the analysis.

#### An introduction to my own position

It is my intention in this study to analyse the ways in which schooling reproduces particular forms of class and female consciousness. Within this analysis there will be an examination of the distinct forms of female consciousness as experienced by black and Asian students. I hope that my analysis will be socialist and feminist in its approach. I hope also to use some of the notions to be found within the work of Antonio Gramsci. Arnot (1982) has commented that there has been very little educational research concerned with girls' experience of schooling that has attempted to investigate the ways in which both bourgeois, class and male hegemony is negotiated within schools. Hegemony is a valuable tool of analysis in as much as it is associated with the production and reproduction of forms of consciousness. It is especially important to try and analyse the concept of hegemony in relations to

schooling as hegemony relates to a form of domination which is imposed, not by force, but by a combination of persuasion and coercion.

Part of the objective of this study will be to try and understand how women have come to accept certain aspects of the oppression. Hegemony and its mechanisms helps us to reveal how women become ensnared in male definitions of the world. But it is not only women who are the victims of hegemonic forces. Hegemony is a relationship between classes and social forces. A hegemonic or bourgeois class may be able to gain the consent of other classes and social forces and maintain a system of alliances which control not only state power but also have significant influence through all parts of society. What becomes of interest to the feminist sociologist is the part played not only by the bourgeois hegemonic forces but also the structure of male-female relations.

Apple (1979) has suggested that we should look at three crucial areas, the institution of the school, the forms of knowledge that we teach, and the social relations that dominate classrooms.

Education is a key institution in maintaining male bourgeois Euro-centric hegemony. It will be essential that my study will expose some of the assumptions that inform some of the practices in schools which reinforce

and consolidate certain forms of hegemonic control. I will be particularly interested in assumptions about gender difference and how it affects the expectations of the writers in my study. It will be important to isolate the ways in which gender relations are structured by class relations and to investigate patterns of resistance when the girls are faced with contradictory messages.

I hope that the accounts written by the girls will capture some of those contradictory messages, specific activities and forms of "commonsense" understandings which underlie the girls response to a variety of class experiences, racist attitudes and differing forms of male control. I hope that my findings will suggest that girls are continually resisting the imposition of class, gender and ethnic identities producing new and different forms of male and female behaviour.

I hope to show that schools are only part of a series of agencies involved in gaining the consent of men and women to specific sets of ideological conditions. These conditions are necessary for the reproduction of labour power and capitalist production. Definitions of femininity often associate women with a central role within the family whilst men's primary attachment is to the place of employment. By consenting to this arrangement women come to accept the 'naturalness' of antagonistic relationships. It becomes impossible to imagine any other form of social reality. By this

process women come to accept that femininity has a natural association with child rearing or being found acceptable on male definitions of what is considered feminine. As will be seen from the girls' writings these definitions are not easily imposed nor are they inevitable. Dale (1982) has stressed "hegemony has to be consciously and actively worked for and maintained; consent must be maintained among possibly recalcitrant groups" (1982).

The imposition of bourgeois hegemony plays a part in persuading working class students to lower their expectations, limit their behaviour and accept their class position as inevitable. Girls have to face these constraints but all girls have to face male bourgeois hegemonic notions of what are "normal and acceptable" forms of female behaviour.

The strength of Gramsci's notion of hegemony lies in the fact that we are encouraged to analyse reproduction as a contested and uneven process. Political order and the construction of consent are achieved through state policies and ideological forces which operate within civil society, the key areas being the education system and the family.

Sociologists of education have been fastidious in their analysis of the ways in which schooling is organised and controlled and how it is related to social and economic

forces. I hope that my study will lead the feminist teacher to challenge and demystify some of the commonsense assumptions that underly our treatment of girls, relegating them to secondary situations within the workplace and associating femaleness with a central role within the family. Femininity is a socially constructed set of characteristics and open to transformation.

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### CHAPTER THREE

#### Family and School Connections:

#### the reproduction of family life

In this chapter, I would like to examine the ways in which the experience of family life and the organisation of schooling come together in such a way, producing both classed and gendered students. It could be argued that the central work of the family is the reproduction of feminine and masculine subjects. Of course families offer housing, clothing, food and emotional support but the structure of the family depends not only upon its class position but also upon the relationship between male and female members. Bourgeois definitions of family form have a significant affect upon the ways in which we perceive the form of family life. It is important to remember that working class and middle class families are constructed out of different sets of relationships.

The work of the school can be similarly described. Schools can be seen as being in a specific relationship with the work of production. Schools prepare men and women for both class obedience and prepare their students for different destinies within the home and within the work place. But women have resisted these pressures, recent feminist analysis represents a challenge to earlier functionalist accounts of the ways in which women's educational experience was related to the requirements of both the domestic and labour market

(Wolpe 1977). Radical feminist analysis emphasises the patriarchal features of educational processes, suggesting that patriarchal structures determine the position of women within the home and within the labour market (Spender (1980, 1982), Weiner (1985)). Processes of reproduction of specific sets of gender and class relations are not easily achieved. Whilst most girls may find their central location is within the home being subjected to similar forms of femininity and acceptable constructions of what it means to be a 'good mother', girls from different social class backgrounds experience different material and cultural conditions. As Connell et al (1985) stress "both class and gender are systems of social relations, both systems of categories ... they interweave to form characteristic situations. When we refer to ruling class families or to working class schools, we are referring to a particular kind of situation in which people develop practices" (page 36)

Women from different backgrounds display different responses to dominant notions of femininity, romance, domesticity, motherhood and the significance of a career.

Before expanding on these areas of analysis I would like to comment upon the form of the family and suggest that forms of family relationships which come to be regarded as dominant models are not universal, nor are they incapable of transformation. And yet schools, together with other agencies concerned with reproducing



ideological messages continue to support a particular form of family life in which the head of the household is male. It has been suggested that schools and families work together in order to reproduce those social relations of dominance and subordination that are necessary for capitalist production to continue, but this analysis is not developed by Althusser (1971). Feminist analysis has been involved in extending Althusser's suggestions introducing into the debate the ways in which the educational system is related to sexual division of labour within the household and within the labour force. Divisions within the family are also reproduced within the labour force, and these two systems are closely connected. The education system helps to satisfy the requirements of both systems. (Wolpe (1977), Arnot (1984), David (1980), Connell et al (1982)).

But let us return to an analysis of the ways in which families are constructed. The members of the family are economically dependent upon the head of the household and the home is a place of safety, security, a satisfactory and approved site of sexual relationships and an ideal place for the reproduction and socialisation of children. The family is seen as a private place where warm human relationships can be nurtured, and yet we are aware of the fact that socialisation involves the imposition of authority and that no description of the family will adequately cover the experience of family life across classes or across

cultures. The accounts written by the girls clearly indicate that their experiences of family life differ enormously and are related to cultural and class associations. In the following account it is also possible to see that the relationship between male and female members of the household is dominated by male aggression and an experience of masculinity which does not place the male in the centre of a cosy domestic family.

Ten reason for leaving home

1. Fighting.
  2. Other women in his life.
  3. Not enough money.
  4. Arguments against in laws.
  5. Jealousy.
  6. Unfair child care.
  7. Drunkenness.
  8. Watching too much football.
  9. Never going out together.
  10. Selfishness
- page 45 (I).

Whilst another writes commenting on reasons for leaving home suggests another ten reasons.

1. Him taking me for granted.
2. Him hitting me.
3. Him refusing to take responsibility for the children.

4. Him not handing over his wages.
5. Him going out and not letting me.
6. Arguments about protectiveness of me.
7. Arguments over me getting pregnant and him not being interested.
9. Him bringing all his friends around drunk, making noise, waking the children up and showing off.
10. Him not decorating the house to an acceptable standard (page 45) (2).

The next account differs in as much as the writer, although aware of the possibility of dependence upon a male partner, strikes out anticipating a much more independent and economically secure young adulthood.

The writers come from very different backgrounds, the first writer living on a council estate which has a majority of housing units within high rise flats. The second writer attends a selective girls grammar school and has already achieved examination success at sixteen and is studying for advanced examinations. She writes "I decided to apply for the qualification in geriatric medicine as it was under staffed and I reckoned I would have a good chance of employment and a successful career.

I knew therefore that my salary wouldn't be instantly forthcoming but that I needed to start making plans. I had enough money to buy a car as I knew I would not have financial difficulties any longer.

When I bought it I felt much more independent. I had my own flat and was financially more secure, and being able to make decisions for myself, was no longer having to rely so much on other people. This feeling of self reliance and independence gave me a taste of freedom which swayed my decision on marriage. I decided that I did not want to be tied down, just at the beginning of my career. I wanted to be able to make all the decisions of the immediate future without the responsibility of disrupting someone else's life" (page 131) (3).

In contrast to the account written by the middle class white writer I would like to refer to another piece written by an Asian writer who attended a small mixed comprehensive school situated in the inner city. Her concept of family life means that she will not have access to paid employment and her centre of attention will be her home and children.

She begins "the best thing about having children is when you get married your husband would not allow you to go to work. Then of course you'll be bored all day thinking of what to do, and where to go. Anyway, while having a baby it could be quite fun. You will not be lonely and bored because you'll be cleaning the baby, feeding it and so on. You could love your baby and bring it up the way your parents brought you up. You can always take your baby to parks and playgroups where

you would meet new people and you would enjoy yourself. Having a baby could be a lovely pleasure to your life" (page 18) (4). Many of the girls in this study did not come from 'traditional' forms of family household, nor did they imagine themselves as being part of such an arrangement in the future. They did, however, envisage futures in which they would be emotionally enmeshed with their partners or the fathers of their children. When referring to the idea of the nuclear family, in its idealised form, it is important to know how this system of organisation is conceptualised. Caroline New and Miriam David (1985) give us a clear definition of the social construction of the family network. "At its most general the term 'family' refers to people linked by kinship and marriage. Some of these links - such as marriage, parenthood and the 'next of kin' relationship are built into the system of law, ..... as well as the customs of everyday life. Behind all these lurks the model of the normal family household consisting of two parents linked by marriage living in one home with the dependent offspring of their partnership. The man is assumed to be the main economic provider, the woman the main emotional provider and home-maker" (page 56) 5)

It is this idea of the family that we find the law, DHSS, medical services and schools referring to as the normal form of household arrangement. Schools often look at the particular form of family culture as either beneficial or detrimental to the future of a child's achievement at school. Working class or middle class

identities are assumed to have been acquired unproblematically and schools have not really considered the fact that gender identities are also negotiated within the home and these may differ within classes and across cultural groups. If schools were either encouraged or asked to account for these factors it would have considerable implications for the organisational aspects of curriculum, parental involvement and an examination of racist and sexist assumptions to say nothing of bourgeois definitions of family life.

In the following chapter I hope to demonstrate some of the ways in which daughters from both classes attempt to redefine their position within the family hierarchy. Some of these attempts have an element of fantasy, others are real attempts of resistance to authority structures which the girls find unacceptable ... for the most part we are left wondering how the family and school continue to unite so firmly in reproducing legitimate dominant forms of class and gender relations.

I referred earlier to the idealised form of family life in which the adult partnership is formed between heterosexuals, preferably with the male partner being the major wage earner. The female partner identified as the source of emotional stability and free from the constraints of paid employment is presumed to care for all the members of the family. This particular

arrangement is supported by everyday arrangements of life, such as school hours, and by the law and social security allowances. Carol Smart (1984) states quite clearly that in divorce or family law women are often relegated to a primary position as carers. When dealing with one parent families, or other types of household structure, such as a lesbian partnership or an older child wishing to care for a much younger child, the law always compares the more unorthodox form of care with a so called superior lawful form of family arrangement which has its roots in the marriage contract. It is not only the law that contributes to the primacy of a particular form of family arrangement, the tax system supports the nuclear family by the married man's tax allowance and mortgage tax relief. Employers often discriminate against single mothers as they have a particular image of the family in their heads which suggests that single women are unable to maintain both their waged position and their position of carer within the household. The nuclear family and the position of mother has support from a variety of agencies, thus making the mother, both emotionally and economically less powerful than the man. New and David (1985) again "the law and the tax system enshrine the ideal of the male bread winner and the dependent wife and mother" (page 41).

There are obviously contradictions which exist between idealised forms of the family and the families in which we not only find ourselves, but those which we observe

and families which include our own students. The particular idealised form of family life which has been previously described is very resilient, and despite evidence to the contrary is firmly fixed within the minds of teachers and students. It has serious implications for the reproduction of gender relations.

But let us try and develop a concept of power relations within the family and attempt to analyse the ways in which social relations are organised in such a way that the interests of some groups become subsumed as other groups retain and reproduce hegemonic control. Women lose power within a relationship if they become economically and financially dependent upon men. This often, although not always, occurs within a married partnership. Despite the fact that legislation on domestic violence (Domestic Violence Act 1976) has reduced the symbolic power that men wielded against women, the economic basis of women's dependency is at the root of their powerlessness. It is true that at the point of divorce (Matrimonial Proceedings and Property Act 1970) the marriage contract has been perceived as an economic or financial contract. Focus has moved away from fidelity to an emphasis upon a redistribution of assets. In this way divorce legislation has shown the importance of the economic nature of the marriage contract.



Women who decide to become mothers are also often forced into partnership. It is extremely difficult for women who wish to be mothers but who do not want to be dependent upon men, to earn enough money to maintain themselves and their children. Marriage is presented as the most suitable and most secure environment in which to socialise children. Children are dependent upon adults for their survival. Most frequently it is women who withdraw from the labour market and withdraw further into the privacy of their home in order to nurture their child. Child care is therefore gender divided, and women who give birth to their children are then expected to prolong this biologically determined experience well into adulthood, caring, feeding, giving emotional and physical support to both male and female children. In this process women are often either taken away from their place of employment, or have restricted access to employment possibilities, and by so doing become more dependent upon the male bread winner.

The writers, when expressing their fears about life within the family, produced a variety of responses to their imagined future. Some writers, mainly the Asian girls expressed some concern about not being able to work "the worst thing about being a mother is having to stay at home on your own while your husband has gone to work and your children are at school if your have any" (page 86) and another writer anticipating a future within the home expresses her pleasure in having children "the best thing about having children is that

my husband has gone to work and I have not got a job the children will be company and a comfort" (page 17 ) (5).

Those writers who anticipated a well paid career did not let marriage interfere with their planning. It can be assumed that both the expectation of school and their class background affected these perceptions.

In the following account the writer's main concern is to direct her attention towards gaining professional qualifications.

"After the celebrations it was back to reality and time to make decisions. I immediately accepted the job at St Matthews College Hospital as I felt I needed the experience more than anything else. Meanwhile I carried on looking at alternative positions with more opportunity for advancement.

I also applied for the additional qualification in geriatric medicine. I wanted to be as well equipped as I could be for my job. Also the fact of under-staffing in the branch would mean opportunities for promotion to more demanding jobs.

I decided quickly not to get married at that stage of my career. There was no hurry or necessity to marry. I preferred to get myself settled in my job and my flat and concentrate on my own life" (page 119) (6).

It is however interesting to note that not all middle class girls seek financial and emotional independence. Some girls, although wanting to gain access to a career, defer to the authority of their male partners. This is shown in an imagined account of life as a young adult written by a white middle class girl.

"We had passed for the same college, so after much discussion we decided to live together for at least the following year until getting married. He decided eventually to enrol for gynaecology, as the profession was more highly paid than geriatric medicine. However, after two months work he soon realised that the course involved much more work than he had imagined, in order to pass the finals at the end of the year. Gradually he was spending more and more time working in the library and the labs, leaving home very early and returning very late. After six months of this I suddenly approached him with the subject of my taking up an extra nursing course, as previously I had only been doing a part time course. He replied that it was out of the question. We had little enough time to spend together as it was, and in any case there was no need as he would be earning sufficient salary to maintain both of us" (page 115) (?).

Some of the working class writers expressed a certain amount of contradiction in coming to terms with dependence upon male economic strength and the authority of a male partner. In the following account the writer

does not seem to be able to conceptualise any sort of negotiation about domestic labour within the home.

"I am mostly frightened because my husband/boyfriend might expect me to do everything in the house from washing up to tying shoe laces" (page 70) (8).

Susan Yeandle (1984) discovered that assistance from husbands always had to be negotiated. Essential labour within the home had to be negotiated with male members of the family. Some women also relied upon other members of the family or neighbours for child care arrangements. Some women asked permission to go to work whilst other men said they would be 'at hand'. In order to free herself for employment the woman had to come to an arrangement with her husband. It was mainly the responsibility of woman to initiate these discussions.

Yeandle (1984) writes "the overwhelming impression of the marital bargaining over the question of wives' employment was that husbands held the balance of power ... in general, wives sought husbands' permission, or at least approval in taking a job. They got it especially if the husbands were to be involved in domestic tasks, only when the material reward in the form of the wives' wages could be seen to be of benefit to the family, and in some cases to the husband himself, or when the husband recognised that a more contented wife would be a pleasanter companion" (page 148). New and David (1985) suggest that "to bring motherhood and power

together women have to leave home to work and men have to go home to care". They do however go on to say that economic freedom for women is nothing like enough to bring about the breakdown of the present division of labour. More radical analysis concerned with the construction of the family needs to be encouraged and a transformation of the relationship between the workplace and the privacy of the household. There would need to be a significant change in the 'value' of child care and men and women would need to reconstruct their definitions of masculine and feminine identity.

How then do girls continue to regard their primary location within the family or within the partnership as one in which they will accept lower wages, less status and be responsible for child care? Almost without exception the girls in my study all saw themselves as potential mothers. Admittedly these accounts were written at a distance and what will actually ensue may be quite different, nevertheless it is crucial to understand why girls continue to want to be mothers. The opposite analysis is also strangely appropriate and perhaps we should consider some of the questions which arise for women when they choose a future without children.

When analysing a class divided society we can see that both men and women are subject to material and ideological forms of social control. Men and women who live on fixed incomes, and families who are increasingly

required to take responsibility for the care of the elderly, handicapped and sick members attempt to perform these functions whilst subjected to very different material circumstances. Women experience particular dimensions of social control which affect different classes in different ways. The response to these different forms of constraint vary. The social control of women assumes many forms, and whilst in my study we will be investigating the individual lives of the writers, it is crucial to acknowledge that some forms of social control lie within the public sphere and not within the individual psychology of particular women. My emphasis will be rather upon the relationship between the two spheres and not upon the primary importance of individual personalities.

Women are all too ready to take upon themselves responsibility for a whole range of circumstances beyond their control and in this they are encouraged by ideological forms of social control which suggest that women should be considered sources of great emotional and practical assistance within the home. The 'strong woman' must also in contradiction be both economically and emotionally independent. Women are controlled by the romantic notion that their womanly qualities are essential for the continuing comfort and warmth of a secure refuge into which men and other family members can retreat. In order to be successful in this pursuit women absorb enormous amounts of conflict and take an unequal share of responsibility.

When anticipating their future roles as mothers some of the writers were quite astute in their understanding that mothering would not be as easy as some popular notions suggest. One writes "they (children) get on your nerves, at five they get even worse, they wake you up in the middle of the night" (page 89). An another writer expresses her concern "they start to cry in the middle of the night and wake you and that makes you angry ... children cannot look after themselves and they have snotty noses". The actual discomfort of child birth is acknowledged by another writer, "the worst thing about having children is the pain you suffer at birth. Also when you have to walk with a fat stomach people stare at you. You cannot go to discos, parties or any other lively evening out in case you get hurt. Also if you did you will feel off" (page 20) (9).

In two more accounts we can see vividly how the writers experienced the nurturing of strong emotionally secure mothers. These accounts re-enforce the notion of women's independence and reliability as mothers but do not refer to forms of economic control which may operate to confine women to their 'womanly' role. One account begins "about two years ago I started to wear contact lenses. Anyway, after a few weeks of wearing them my eyes swelled up and I was blinded for approximately six days. My relationship with my mother blossomed: she held me tight when the pain became unbearable, she bathed my eyes, comforted me, caressed me and became my eyes for those few days. I was totally dependent upon

her and trusted her completely for the first time I can remember. Somehow she was always there when needed, disappeared when not needed as if our minds were one and the same and we could sense each others needs. It seems rather stupid looking back on it, but those few days that short period meant so much to me. And to think I often doubted her" (page 150).

The next account demonstrates the qualities of care and nurturing associated with womanliness. A daughter describes how her mother cared for a neighbour. "A neighbour of ours who had no close family was dying of cancer. She was seriously affected by it and in a great deal of pain. Her family had rejected her and refused to look after her as they thought that she would be too much trouble. The task of caring for her fell to my mother who did not know her at all well. She ended up spending most of every day with the woman during her last few weeks of life. No one else would visit her. She needed everything doing for her many times a day, was extremely lonely and in terrible pain. It is a strain to watch anyone suffer whether or not you are close to them and I would help my mother. It built up a tremendous admiration for her on me at the time and energy she gave to the woman made me feel much closer for a time" (page 144) (10).

Women are also controlled by a subordinate social and legal status (vis a vis) men within the family. The law



does not recognise the existence of rape within marriage, tax law ensures that wives earnings are treated as husband's property. Since March 1985 there has however been considerable debate about the fact that husband and wife are taxed as one person. In a Green Paper (March 1985) there has been a review of the reform of personal income tax and the detail of these reforms can be seen at the end of this chapter. It is also possible to elect for a separate assessment of wife's income, but this does not result in any reduction of liability (11).

There is a reluctance to recognise domestic violence and the behaviour of prostitutes continues to be criminalised. As Stuart Hall (1978) has suggested the law has a powerful consensual affect in the production and reproduction of ideological messages. It is easy to see in recent cases of child abuse how the law and the media construct standards of good and bad mothering, without situating the cases within social circumstances. Incidentally it is interesting also to see that social workers have increasingly been used to 'police' the domestic lives of certain families who are considered to be at risk.

When commenting upon the relationship of the law and marriage Carol Smart (1984) comments "this indirect relationship between law and the oppression of women is frequently, although not always, mediated via familial and marital relationships, .... law no longer separates

out married women for special treatment in quite the same way as it used to .....but none the less retains some of the elements of this tradition. What is more it continues to reproduce a private sphere of family life in which it concedes considerable authority to the head of household .... law is however implicated in the reproduction of women as subordinates to men and as the primary carers of children .... one parent families, or any other type of unorthodox household structure are always understood or treated in terms of a superior, lawful form of family life which has its roots in marriage" (page XII) ( We can now see that the legal system imposes a greater control over female sexual behaviour than male sexuality. When analysing the role of the welfare state at the point of breakdown in marriage Smart (1984) suggests that it is the concern of the law and the state to preserve marriage and parenthood as a private arrangement constructed out of individual choice. Magistrates and solicitors felt that state provision would undermine marriage and reduce parental responsibility. There seems to be no discussion of the problems faced by both working class men and women in maintaining children financially. It seems emotional security and custodial responsibility take priority over financial considerations. Marriage and motherhood remain, through juridical statements firmly within the private sphere.

It does not need an explanation, at this point, to assert that the capitalist mode of production relies upon private domestic labour in order to function. The domestic exploitation of women and its relationship to production has been argued extensively within the work of Oren (1973), Gardiner (1956b), Delphy (1979), Barrett and McIntosh (1979), Hartmann (1979), Molyneux (1979), Bland, Brunsdon, Hobson and Winship (1978), Pahl (1980), Land (1980) and Whitehead (1981). It is of crucial significance why that private labour should be female. It has been suggested that the immediate solution to this question lies within the reproductive capacity of the female. Nancy Chodorow (1978) is one of many women who asked why it should be that women, after child birth should prolong the experience of nurturing and caring for the children, largely to the exclusion of men. She suggested that the family performed the crucial function, whereby a society's economic and social requirements were satisfied, in the creation of appropriate male and female personalities. Eisenstein (1984) commenting upon the work of Nancy Chodorow declares "it was in the family that children learned to be mothers. But the quality of this learning, for both sexes, was not by means of identification and the learning of a role by imitation. Rather it was by means of the development of a psychic structure, the very shape of personality" (18).

Chodorow argues that mothering is reproduced at both the level of social organisation and at the level of

individual development, and that in a highly complicated way mothering depended upon the family in order to continue in its present form. It is important to note that she brings together both economic and patriarchal arguments to support the psycho-analytical basis of her argument. Commenting upon the female personality and her desire to reproduce Chodorow (1978) insists "the capacities and orientations I describe must be built into personality; they are not behavioural acquisitions. Women's capacities for mothering and abilities to get gratification from it are strongly internalised and psychologically enforced and are built developmentally into the feminine psychic structure" (page 39)

From this position we can see that Chodorow, whilst acknowledging that childbirth is determined by biological factors, is insistent upon the fact that mothering is a form of human social organisation. She argued that "no woman could be coerced into motherhood, but that mothering was part of the socially constructed 'sense of oneself' as a person capable of mothering or nurturing. A mother does not have to be a biological mother it was quite possible for men to 'mother' but whoever takes on himself or herself the role of nurturer must have themselves participated in a successful parent-child relationship ....anyone boy or girl who has participated in a good enough mother-infant relationship has the relational basis of the capacity for parenting"

(pages 87-88). It seems quite unlikely, given the fact that Chodorow's argument is deeply situated in the successful nurturing qualities which are developed in the specifically female personality, that men will have the opportunity to become successful nurturers. In fact part of her argument suggests that it is females who are ascribed with these unique and special qualities. Early socialisation processes would need to be transformed, and as we already know the 'feminisation' of boys would reduce their ability to compete and develop those masculine attributes which are necessary to gain access into high prestige careers.

One of the weaknesses in Chodorow's argument seems to be that some women choose, despite having maternal feelings to remain non mothers, and that many women who have themselves experienced very satisfactory nurturing do not choose to become mothers themselves. For Nancy Chodorow mothering is embedded in a particular personality, the development of which depended upon receiving a particular quality of nurture. This behaviour could not be learned "is not something that can be taught or simply by giving a girl dolls or telling her that she ought to be mother. It is not something that a girl can learn by behavioural imitation, or by deciding that she wants to do what girls do. Nor can men's power over women explain women's mothering. Whether or not men in particular or society at large - through media, income distribution, welfare policies and schools enforce women's mothering,

and expect or require a woman to care for her children, they cannot require or force her to provide adequate parenting unless, she to some degree and on some unconscious or conscious level has the capacity and sense of self as maternal to do so" (page 33)

When considering Nancy Chodorow's argument on the one-hand it is helpful to hear that it is possible for male members of the household to become nurturers, and that mothering need not be the responsibility of the natural mother, but her argument does seem limited if we are to depend upon an idealised notion of good and bad mothering. Women have to appeal to a variety of outside agencies for help with children. If help is required it gives the impression that the woman is an unsuccessful mother and this again imprisons women into concepts of what is a considered satisfactory child care. These 'standards' constantly change and may rely at one time on dominant theories of psychological analysis, at another on medical evidence concerned with dietary patterns!

I would like to situate Chodorow's work against a position in which social and economic circumstances affect the ways in which women are able to form the necessary bonds associated with good nurturing. It is perhaps easier to attain these material characteristics if the mother is adequately housed and has enough money for food and clothing. Child care is also more possible

with the support of adults and helpful medical advice. It will be obvious in the following chapter of this thesis that some of the girls in my sample, when contemplating motherhood, have high expectations of support from their male partners and their own mothers. What is highly significant is the idealised notion of motherhood .... it is a powerful and romantic notion which is very significant when we are considering the construction of female identity.

Adrienne Rich (1976) moving away from psychological understandings of motherhood, directed attention to a thoroughly 'feminist' analysis by introducing patriarchal control into discussions which centre around motherhood. Her decisive position was concerned with trying to understand and discuss the affect of patriarchal systems of control upon the whole experience of motherhood. She separates out the institution of motherhood and the experience of motherhood in order to investigate the forms of male control which have affected the meaning of motherhood.

"I try to distinguish between two meanings of motherhood, one super imposed on the other: the potential relationship of any woman to her powers of reproduction and to children: and the institution, which aims at ensuring that that potential - and all women - shall remain under male control"

Rich's argument does not rely upon the fact that women's subordinate position was due to her capacity to

reproduce, rather she suggested it was the mode by which that fact had become integrated into the system of male political, economic and emotional power in which women are enmeshed by child birth and child care arrangements. But Rich insisted that the whole concept of motherhood could be transformed if it was possible to free the 'experience' of mothering from the restrictions of the institution. Motherhood had a symbolic structure in which images of madonnas, affectionate memories of mother-child relationships were evoked, a whole set of relationships could be encapsulated 'in a cultural icon of womanhood'. It was a private idealised world which did not include the public, economic, political and legal controls which together with the cultural imagery of the significance of motherhood, held women in a tight hold. She outlines the characteristics of this structure or institution, clearly bringing together both material and ideological forces.

"Rape, and its aftermath; marriage as economic dependence, as the guarantee to a man of 'his' children; the theft of child birth from women; the concept of 'illegitimacy' of a child born out of wedlock; the laws regulating contraception and abortion; the cavalier marketing of dangerous birth control devices; the denial that work done by women at home is a part of 'production'; the chaining of women in links of love and guilt; the absence of social benefits for mothers; the inadequacy of child care facilities in most parts of the world; the unequal pay



women receive as wage earners, forcing them often into dependence on a man; the solitary confinement of 'full time' motherhood; the token nature of fatherhood, which gives a man rights and privileges over children toward whom he assumes minimal responsibility, the psychoanalytical castigation of the mother; the pediatric assumption that the mother is inadequate and ignorant: the burden of emotional work borne by women in the family" (page 276)

This is a powerful catalogue of physical and material sets of relationships, together with ideological, political, legal and economic constraints which blend together to either coerce or command quiet obedience to a form of motherhood which is very difficult to resist. But Rich's book 'Of Woman Born' is a history of the struggle in which women have attempted to regain the experience of motherhood. She does not believe that the form of the 'institution' is inevitable, especially criticising arguments which consider childbirth as a biological and therefore natural experience for women. She pushes aside all arguments which insist that the 'experience' of mothering, should be incorporated with the male dominated 'institution' of mothering. She writes "without a full and profound exploration of the experience of motherhood under patriarchy, women will never be able to transcend the present and move into the future".

By occupying the privacy of the home and taking a major responsibility for child care, women annexe themselves from both political and economic power. Although these responsibilities do reduce the capacity to enter both paid work and political activity some women do manage to combine these worlds. It is a difficult state of affairs to achieve and many women by prioritising their 'work' within the family household reproduce a set of social relations, through the early socialisation of their children, in which, boys and girls come to accept their places within the family. The children learn where the particular power bases lie. Women find themselves in an impossible position whilst conforming to patterns of 'good mothering' not only do they reduce their capacity to earn and compete for a wage, they are also responsible for reproducing a particular set of social relations which will be accommodated by the capitalist mode of production. The separation of the home and the corresponding ideology of privacy and intimacy, from the place of production should be analysed as an historical process. In understanding how housework and child care come to have such a significance, it is important as Caroline New and Miriam David (1985) suggest to try and unmask some popular concepts about the universality and timelessness of women's place at the kitchen sink ... "before industrialisation and during much of the process of change labelled the Industrial Revolution most of the work women did at home as well as away from home could be termed social production: that is women were working

for the public good, for more than their own family group. Their products which were surplus to the family's requirements would be sold or otherwise exchanged for different things made, harvested or hunted by others. Housework did not exist as a separate activity" (page 37).

The family wage was presumed to be enough to support all dependent members of the family, but increasingly women have been drawn back into part-time employment to supplement the low income earned by their husbands. It must also be stated that although the DHSS operates on the assumption that its clients are members of a particular sort of household arrangement, many women with children live outside the nuclear family, to say nothing about families who totally depend upon a wife's part-time earnings and unemployment benefit. The structure of family life and economic life is in a state of transition but one is left wondering just how much the division of child care has changed within the family. Men still command greater power in the labour market and New and David (1985) suggest that this power is not connected with their power within the family but rather their 'non motherhood'. "It does have a lot to do with their non motherhood, and their relative freedom from the essential unpaid work of child care, which gives them a different place in the labour market from that of women ... women still have to choose to fit paid work in with rearing their families. Men's choice is

about how hard they will work to provide for their families. The choices men and women make are still rigidly circumscribed" (pages 14-15)

I would suggest that non-motherhood for both men and women means that they occupy different places within the structure of employment. I would add to the debate the fact that many girls in my study contemplated non-motherhood but would also anticipate differing places within waged labour which were associated with their examination success and parental expectations.

The following account describes in a direct way why the writer rejects motherhood in favour of a career within the health service.

"After embarking on the house job I realised that there would probably be more opportunities if I gained extra qualifications. I decided to opt for gynaecology since I had come across many (male) gynaecologists who had been extremely unsympathetic towards women's problems. I thought it would be beneficial to women in general to have a feminist doctor to turn to.

I was wrong about starting the course since my three year pre-medical course had been very male orientated I was worried about whether I would fit in.

About the marriage question. I had some boyfriends but was not seriously involved with any of them since I realised that the 'couple' unit can easily degenerate to a very patriarchal unit, and I was not willing to let that happen. I decided to live on my own since this would give me the best opportunity to study quietly and I would have fewer private commitments. The doctor's flat that I had had ample space for a single person, although things like a double bed suggested that I should have a partner. I had been given the impression that living alone was not desirable but during the year although I felt lonely at times I invited many friends around to stay and I was of course freer to go out when and where I wanted.

I had to work quite hard on the gynaecology course, suffering endless jokes about women's bodies which I tried not to take to heart, although several times I considered applying to the EOC about sexual harassment!

My parents were disappointed that I had not elected to marry; they kept dropping subtle hints about wanting grand-children. However I felt that it would not be right for me to marry, such is the discrimination in the medical service that women are required to stay away for ages if they have children, men of course only for a week at most!

Living on the grant was disappointing since I might have been receiving a houseman's (sic) salary, but I reminded

myself of the increased career prospects that I stood to gain" (page 110).

Non-motherhood was also a choice for one of the working class Afro-Caribbean writers. It is noticeable that the writer did not anticipate a career but rather a job when she enters waged labour. Anxiety seems to override her experience at work and within her relationships. "In ten years time the thing that will stop me going to the top of my chosen profession will be lack of self confidence. I probably will take a lot from my employers eg. late nights, dirty jokes, but not sexual harassment.

At home I will either be living with some-one or alone. My failings - there will be probably not wanting to get married and have children. I would also fail my boyfriend if he was a talkative type" (page 66) (11).

I isolated these accounts to illustrate the point that although motherhood undoubtedly affects entry into the structure of waged labour women from different racial, class and educational backgrounds do not have the same experience of waged labour despite their "non-motherhood".

Motherhood, the privacy of the household, dominant notions of what constitutes 'good' and 'bad' mothering continue to keep women within the household. When

women do attempt to combine child care with paid work outside the home they are forced to apply for low paid, low status jobs as available child care is either too expensive or only obtainable for short hours. The privatised world of women and children came to be discussed as an idealised form of relations upon which family policy was based. Family policy has been influenced by an idealised form of family life which in turn has affected matters of sexuality, reproduction and education.

In order to release women from the arduous burden, not only of childcare, but also from situations which imprison women in a particular form of femininity, tied emotionally to their male partners, women need to free themselves from these practical and emotional constraints. New and David (1985) suggest that if men could participate in child care much more fully, changing from a position of controlling to sharing, women would be able to participate more fully in the world of paid work. They extend their argument by explaining that not only would we have to transform our notions of masculinity but many other institutions would have to undergo considerable changes in form. In order to transform the family, as conceptualised in its present form, we need a radical imagination, a vigorous interrogation, changes in family policy and family law, and a whole rearrangement of child care and redistribution of control within the family. The form and perception of the family in our society remains

intransigent to change. Harris (1981) highlights the problem for those interested in investigating the system of familial relations "why then given all we know about the variation in domestic arrangements, it is so common to find the domestic domain treated as a universal, or at least very widespread institution? Even those of us who recognise that the co-resident nuclear family is a historically specific idea will in the next breath talk of 'the family', 'the household' in a way that surreptitiously re-introduces an assumption of universalism. Working as an anthropologist I have often noticed myself perform this same slippage and have wondered why it comes so easily. One explanation is that the image of the household as a separate, private sphere is so powerful in contemporary capitalist organisation that we extend it to cover other radically different structures, using our own categories of thought to interpret different realities" (pages 51-52)

#### Family school connections

I want now to attempt to unravel some of the complexities which characterise the construction of the idealised family form and to isolate some of the educational processes which are related to the reproduction of this particular set of relationships.



If we look at the ways in which school relations are structured we are faced with the overwhelming evidence that these relations control both access to waged labour and the differential roles that boys and girls will play within the domestic sphere. At one time these two worlds were united but within the development of capitalism we can see as McDonald M (1981) has shown "that the school has assumed a new role between these two arenas, attempting to transmit their structural relations in such a way as to legitimate and reproduce their form in each new generation" (page 36).

By analysing certain processes which occur within schooling in this way it may be possible to connect the ways in which boys and girls are prepared differentially for their position within waged labour and within the family. We have already discussed the work of Bowles and Gintis (1976) and looked at the ways in which the social relations of schools are replicated within the structure of work relations. It is my intention to try to expand considerations of different forms of socialisation experienced both within the family and within the authority structures of schooling in such a way as to include the existence of patriarchal relations. If Bowles and Gintis (1976) are correct in their assumption that the future work situation depends upon and also reflects the authority structures of the educational establishment it is crucial to establish possible connections between the ways in which girls experience these constraints differently from those of

boys. It is also important to isolate the ways in which class membership affects female middle class and female working class consciousness when investigating the ways in which girls experience schooling.

Schooling has different implications for boys and girls. Whilst the primary objective for boys is work within production, the primary consideration for the majority of girls is a future position within the family in which the girl takes the major responsibility for the daily regeneration and reproduction of labour power. Whilst boys anticipate a future within waged work supported by a female member of the family, girls are faced with not only a highly segmented labour force in which they are situated in the secondary sectors, but they are also constrained by exaggerated forms of feminine identity which ensure their possible enslavement within idealised forms of family life. Some girls, especially middle class girls do have a more direct relationship with waged labour and attempt to utilise their educational qualifications in order to gain financial independence, but these efforts are often modified and constrained by socially constructed notions of domesticity, motherhood: and idealised concepts of female identity. These forms of female identity are entrenched and continually reproduced at all levels of social activity, especially within the authority structures of schooling where appropriate masculine and feminine forms of behaviour and socialisation are reinforced. "Girls, on the other

hand, will receive an education which stresses their caring role in domestic life and personal characteristics such as a serving mentality which will prepare them for the home or low status domestic industries. In each case, the new generation will acquire the behavioural norms for appropriate levels of the capitalist production process - the types of personal demeanor, modes of self presentation, self image and social class identifications which are the crucial ingredients of job adequacy" (page 131)

Most boys achieve manhood through identifying with either hard, physical manual work or superior status as major wage earners whilst girls become women through this position as wives and mothers, identifying primarily with their roles in the family. In coupling with such imperatives women reproduce their own subordination within the family by their continual economic and emotional dependence upon male members of the family unit. Not all women conceptualise their position in the family in similar ways. Working class girls are often denied the opportunity to increase their self image through higher status, reasonably paid careers. They are forced into the private world of the home, children and dependence upon part-time home working or shift work to supplement their partner's low wages or unemployment benefit. Middle class girls and working class girls who have achieved a degree of academic success at school, usually associated with a longer period of schooling have a different orientation

to housework. Housework is part of a process which enables the women to be a 'better' mother or a more compassionate wife. Her self-image is related both to good mothering, 'perfect wife' and also associated with the analysis of correspondences between the relationship of schooling and work. As Carter (1976) has argued, we need also to look at the effects of male authority within both the family and the hierarchies of the work process; "the structural relation of school experience to subsequent labor market experience for women is very complex and does not exactly replicate the relation that obtains for men. For instance, many women achieve good grades, graduate from high school and still obtain only secondary jobs. To understand the relationship of women to existing job structures we must also consider, not only the structure and ideology of schooling, but also the structures and ideology of the family"

One of the most difficult problems that I have to face within this thesis is concerned with the ways in which women by their association with and position within the private world of the family, reproduce their own subordination. By identifying with this position, and all that is associated with particular notions of female identity women become distanced from paid productive employment, although in reality they rely upon waged work. It is such a complex situation, as we can see that it is men, who not only constrain our sexual and economic independence within the family, but it is men

who are also in dominant positions within all other aspects of our lives. The school system certainly maintains and transmits an ideology of sex difference as well as supporting and maintaining the class system. Perhaps it is not without significance, that when we investigate the relationship between schooling and wage labour, we find that inevitably the discussion centres around the ways in which education is related to the reproduction of capitalist relations. When observers and theorists discuss labour relations they usually refer to waged labour, skills and qualifications relate to specific careers or particular skilled occupations. It is assumed with very little analysis that women's occupational destiny will be influenced and constrained by their role in the family. There is hardly any analysis of the position of boys as having a future as husbands and fathers. They are not central, in the same way, to the maintenance of the reproduction of the social relations of production. Young men when facing the pressure to marry or become fathers are faced with an entirely different set of ideological constructions concerned with the form of family life. Marriage does not have the same significance, it does not put them into a position of dependency, nor do they have to spend large amounts of time nurturing and socialising children without financial rewards. They do have to contend however with the notion of supporting a family on a supposed full time wage. (Tolson (1977), Willis (1979)). It is maybe, the realisation that for boys the distinct area of waged work as a separate world

means that they are able to make curricula options which do not have to include any responsibility for domestic affairs. The curriculum for boys and girls does not blend together, whilst the participants are anticipating quite different futures. Predominantly girls choose courses which do not lead to well paid high status careers. This choice of course is not in any sense made independently from other considerations, especially those concerned with what is considered as appropriate female behaviour. When they do manage to obtain the necessary academic qualifications, women dominate within the caring professions where the characteristics needed for child care, nurturing and caring are developed into professional skills utilised by the teaching profession, medical institutions and social services. Despite initiatives implemented to break these cycles girls and boys become aware of differential treatment as they experience the hierarchical and patriarchal relations which operate not only within the school but also within the family. In the following chapter I will be giving examples of the ways in which girls from different classes and different cultures respond to the sometimes bourgeois definitions of family form which were implicit in the expectations of the school's authority structure. There can be no simple description of the family which will adequately describe the arrangements of kinship, sexuality and household management which occur in a multi-cultural society. Nevertheless schools in the inner cities often use taken for granted

assumptions about the nature and economic status of certain families and base their treatment of students upon unthoughtout assumptions. Not all families are based upon mutual respect, and the economic power within families is dependent upon the family member who has access to employment. Forms of masculine control may vary from culture to culture and despite female participation in part-time waged work, patriarchal authority may affect the ways in which family members experience these differing sets of relations.

Davin (1978) argues that bourgeois definitions of the family are used by educationalists to establish or re-establish the family as a stabilizing force. She not only sees schooling as reproducing and maintaining patterns of control at school, but also reproducing control patterns which are functional for the operation of family life. Parents, especially mothers, assist the school in producing a future generation which will accept the social and economic conditions. Davin writes "I would argue also that a further aim of schooling was to impose on working class children the bourgeois view of family functions and responsibilities. Education was to form a new generation of parents (and especially mothers) whose children would not be wild, but dependent and amenable, accepting not only the obvious disciplines of school and work but also the less visible constraints of life at the bottom of the heap"

She wrote this comment when investigating the contents of reading books prepared for the use of school board girls at the turn of the nineteenth century. It has a contemporary resonance. Historically, we can trace very distinct patterns of schooling provided for girls drawn from different classes. All women, through educational processes were being prepared for marriage but those partnerships were undertaken in very different economic and cultural circumstances. Whilst working class girls learnt domestic subjects to equip them to be wives and mothers, these skills could also be 'bought' by their middle class 'sisters' as domestic labour. Middle class girls concentrated upon the acquisition of household management skills as they did not have to actually perform domestic tasks.

As the school, welfare agencies and the welfare state developed the family and the school, together with health agencies, took over the socialisation and health needs of the children. In schools the curriculum reflected bourgeois ideologies of motherhood, hygiene and home management were developed into home economics and child care courses. Overwhelmingly it is girls who opt for these courses ensuring a future within marriage which entails female responsibility for household management and child care. By accepting this sexual division of labour girls from all classes contribute to their own subordination within marriage. It is however possible to show that middle class girls do have far more freedom in terms of work opportunities and they



are able to delay marriage or living together for longer than working class girls. This may be due to the fact that their economic independence means they do not have to rely upon a male wage. June Purvis (1983) has shown that identification with domesticity and motherhood had been an ideal pursued by women from all classes, she emphasises the fact that female social class background is a key factor when we analyse girls differing experiences of schooling. Writing about the experience of attending an independent girls' boarding school, Purvis refers us to Judith Okely's description of her own schooling. In this account Okely suggests that the advantages of this type of education are not solely to do with university entrance but through the network of middle and upper class connections which gave a girl access to the world of possible and acceptable marriage partnerships. In this way girls acquired a specific cultural capital which could be exchanged within the 'marriage market'. "Some middle class girls attend schools, boarding or day, of high academic quality, which encourage independent careers for their pupils. But there are other middle or upper class girls who are denied this, and precisely because of their class. The development of a distinct class consciousness is seen as more important than scholarship and achievement for them, as are beliefs which maintain the boundaries of their class. The girls are protected for a future marriage contract within an elite whose biological and social reproduction they ensure"

Within state maintained education girls have experienced many changes within increased opportunities, but there is still an emphasis upon domesticity at the cost of preparation for economic activity. This is supported by Wolpe (1976) and David (1980) who refer to the Norwood Report (1943) where it was suggested that there were differences in the destination of boys and girls after schooling. Boys were breadwinners and girls, particularly the less able or 'secondary mods' were destined towards a primary location as wife and mother.

Madeleine McDonald (1981) indicates the different ways in which education affects the struggles of working and middle class women.

"For working women, the struggle for education was that of their class as a whole, who fought for education as a means of improving their conditions as a fight for survival. Aristocratic and middle class women fought for the right to work to prevent financial insecurity when single, or economic dependence on men when married" (page 81)

There certainly are differences in how working class and middle class girls anticipate their future careers and their future lives as wives, partners and mothers. Chris Griffin (1985) has shown that the majority of girls in her study accepted that heterosexuality, marriage and motherhood were inevitable 'facts of life' for young women. The anticipated futures, shown

through the writing of the girls in my study echo Chris Griffin's findings. With Chris, I too "expected to find considerable differences between the experiences of the more academic middle class sixth formers and their working class peers ....I anticipated that these privileges combined with the impact of the 'second wave' of twentieth century feminism would enable young middle class women to avoid some of the most inequalities of married life. They at least stood some chance of earning a reasonable wage and living as independent women"

I would like at this point to emphasise that although the middle class sixth formers in my study had planned and been encouraged to anticipate independent careers, they were also trapped within real anxieties about how 'feminine' they appeared, whether competition with boys would decrease their appeal as possible partners, or how they would combine careers, family responsibilities and child care. Possibly those conflicts would have to be encountered at a much later date than those facing the working class girls whose immediate concerns were focused upon either getting a job or managing on social security whilst living in their parental home.

Girls are placed in impossible positions within schools, they have to resolve many contradictions. There are huge differences for some girls between the relationships experienced within their homes and within

their schools. Some girls, especially older girls have to shoulder a lot of responsibility and hard manual work within the family. At school they are faced with inappropriate constraints, expectations of quiet studious behaviour and the imposition of a form of family life based upon bourgeois ideal notions which seem very distant from the form of their own family. Teachers often use 'ideal' forms of femininity to control their female students and the girls often respond to these forms of control in aggressive and class based forms of resistance. Angela McRobbie (1978) shows how this form of class based resistance finds expression as it overturns the bourgeois definitions of neatness, diligence, passivity, charm and gentility ... "one way in which the girls combat the class based and oppressive features of the school is to assert their femaleness to introduce into the classroom their sexuality and their physical maturity in such a way as to force the teachers to notice ..... the girls took great pleasure in wearing make-up to school, spent vast amounts of time discussing boyfriends in loud voices in class and used these interests to disrupt class" (1).

Other examples of the behaviour and counter productive resistance of girls at school can be found in the work of Wolpe (1977), Fuller (1980), Davies (1979) and Griffin (1985). When looking at these pieces of work we see that girls refused to conform to acceptable forms of clothing, hair style and jewellery. They absented themselves from school. Some of the black girls in

Fuller's study, as we have already seen, used academic achievement as a means of resisting some of the racist assumptions implied by their teachers as to whether or not the girls would achieve good GCE results. The girls saw qualifications as an entry into a profession. The girls interviewed by Wolpe were more interested in marriage and motherhood and as they approached the final years at school they put their effort into their potential futures within the home.

#### Family, school and state

Finally I want to draw attention to the relationship which exists between the "family/school" and state intervention through educational reform. It is perhaps important in concluding this particular chapter to clarify the ways in which the state has contributed to specific ideas about the ways in which the family and the education system are inter connected. As David (1980) has shown all political parties have attempted in the last ten years to involve parents and teachers in the attempt to solve many of the crises which, according to policy decision makers lay within the educational system. The <sup>government</sup> has suggested that the educational system is at the root of the succession of economic crisis which has faced this country.

One of the reforms of the educational system has been a supposed transition of responsibility from the state to parents. Parents are encouraged to have greater rights over their children's education, meanwhile some of the control of educational provision through the intervention of TVEI has moved into the hands of central government, who through MSC control the resources and approve and authorise TVEI projects. Parental responsibility usually means that parents are encouraged to press for an increase in educational standard thus ensuring the reproduction of the conditional standards thus ensuring the reproduction of the conditions upon which capitalism relies. The family and education are brought together in a coalition which actually re-enforces social and sexual divisions. If we specifically look at the ways in which this 'coalition' affects women we can see that schooling and family responsibilities do conform to certain standards of socialisation. Schooling encourages appropriate forms of child rearing which includes good health care, adequate nutrition, household economic management which also means that the major responsibility for these tasks falls to the women. In advocating an increase in parental responsibility we are encouraged to regard children as the property of the parents which again re-enforces the division of child rearing which takes place within the family. Increasingly the state, by encouraging the family and school to work together to achieve common objectives in maintaining and reproducing traditional relationships which are necessary and

compliant with a particular specific set of socio-economic relations. In order to transform the relationship between the family and the school and to break down this 'unholy alliance' I agree with David (1980) that we should analyse the ways in which we conceptualise parenting and motherhood. We should especially look at the ways in which schooling reproduces those notions placing girls in divisive and unequal relations within the family.

"The major problem, however, is how to achieve a more general and comprehensive transformation of the social and sexual division of labour through the 'family education couple', how especially to bring about a situation in which all, regardless of class, sex or familial status (and also race), would be able to enjoy personal growth and development. From this analysis, such a revolution could only be achieved by concrete struggles over the definitions of parenting and especially for and in schooling" (page 249)

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## CHAPTER FOUR

Family, schooling, family .... a reproductive cycle?

Girls' perceptions of themselves as students,

wives and mothers

This chapter is concerned with the inter-relations of class and gender relationships both within the family and within the school. At times sociologists have seen the school and family as insular sets of social relations. I would like to suggest that the structuring processes which produce classed and gendered subjects "are found within the dynamics of family, school and industrial life, simultaneously even if their affects differ in the different spheres"

The family is a crucial socialising agency which both functions within, and maintains highly specific relations of production. Through the social constructions of personal life women have been relegated to the sphere of the emotional and may be denied access to the public world of negotiation, decision making and the dynamics of industrial life. We have looked at the socio-cultural and socio-economic processes which help us to analyse patriarchal, racial and class relations and to see how they are reproduced within the school and family. In our discussions on class and male hegemony I have suggested that these processes of domination shape the character and practices of students, teachers, parents and bureaucrats. I have attempted to examine the

relationship between educational practices and other state apparatus showing that schooling cannot be considered as entirely autonomous from other ideological agencies. It is perhaps more helpful to analyse economic forces in relation to a variety of other institutions, such as the family, which actively structure and are structured by capitalist forms of production. By using this form of analysis we are able to observe that there is no simple correspondence between the material base and the education system or a simple correspondence with the family.

In the following section of this chapter I would like to examine the various ways in which we can look at the relationship between different forms of family life and various processes of school life and attempt to analyse the ways in which the relationship between schooling and family life can be connected to future work opportunities. As Madeleine Arnot has suggested (1984) "it is only by reintegrating the family and the waged labour process in our analysis of schooling that we can hope to provide an adequate and a radical critique of current class and gender relations".

When we examine the experience of family life we will be faced with a picture of contradiction, complexity, resistance which are constructed out of sets of power relations. It is obvious (despite frequent accounts which state otherwise), that the family is not easily defined. It is constituted by the continuing and

changing practices which are characterised by the power relations that currently operate. The construction or identification of the middle or working class family takes place within changing and contradictory forces. Male and class hegemony are not easily maintained, and it is the child within the family who may be an excellent focus of analysis, as he or she is caught between a variety of 'reproduction' processes both within the family and within the school. One of the main organising principles of the family is age, another major organising principle which requires analysis is the maintenance of patriarchal power. The basis of the family organisation is the relationship between husband and wife, and despite evidence to the contrary, marriage is considered the destiny of most students. The ideology of familism suggests that adults are engaged in an exclusive sexual and domestic situation in which the woman is often the subordinate member. (In referring to the nuclear family I do of course recognise that some of the girls in my study come from very different forms of early socialisation and as their writing demonstrates do not intend reproducing accepted definitions of family form). When we look at the diversity of different types of relationships within families we cannot easily isolate rigid categories of class or those characterised by patriarchal authority, but we can examine some of the gendered practices which occur within the family and may be reconstituted within the organisation of school life. Whilst acknowledging that families, seen as sets of

social relationships, cannot be easily captured or described within class and gender definitions I should like to make it clear that these definitions are constructed within particular economic relationships. Families are places where larger structures meet and interact and we are able to recognise that patterns of working class culture emerge as do patterns of gender division within both working class and middle class families. The family is a place of domestic work mainly undertaken by the girls and women, it is a place of authority and control, and it is a place where age is privileged and children are socialised. Connell, et al (1982) captures this position, "We do not mean to suggest that families are simply the pawns of outside forces any more than schools are. In both cases, class and gender relations create dilemmas (some insoluble), provide resources (or deny them) and suggest solutions (some of which don't work) to which the family or school must respond in its collective practice". The family could never be described as an alliance of equals. Forms of family life and organisation differ not only according to class position but are also structured by forms of patriarchal power. We have seen in the last chapter how the specific exploitation of women within the home has been analysed in the form of the domestic labour debate. I would like now to show the ways in which both the family and schools work together, and at other times work antagonistically, in producing adults who will take their place both within familial sets of relations and at the place of production.

It is essential in understanding the concept of patriarchal capitalism that we capture the lived experience of boys and girls as they attempt to negotiate the complexity of existing class and gender relations. As you will see from the following examples schools are able to re-inforce family culture, but more often than not they bring the student and the family into antagonistic contradictory relationships which result in either confusion or resistance from the student. Madeleine Arnot (1982) again "the school and the family can have a range of different types of relationships, which cannot be easily described either by the physical notion of distance or by the use of a dichotomy of working class and middle class culture .... what characterises this research is an interest in the consistency or inconsistency faced by members of different social classes and sexes in the messages they receive in these different contexts".

Connell, Ashenden, Kessler and Dowsett (1982) have detailed some interesting case studies in which we can see how students were analysed within a network of social relations and socio economic circumstances. In this way it is possible to see how the dynamic of the family, seen as a set of power relations, comes in contact with, and is constrained by other social structures.

In order to illustrate the dynamics of how the student began to make sense of the complexity of the class and gender processes which occur between the family and the school Connell (1982) et al used the case study method of investigation. In this way they were able to highlight specific interactions, say between progressive feminist teachers and non-academic female students, or the conflict generated between an authoritarian poorly educated father and his academically ambitious son. The case studies are not used to emphasise striking or unusual case studies but are placed within a piece of research work which took four people five years to complete. By using the case study methods it is possible to avoid some of the functionalist accounts that sometimes characterise the work of reproduction theorists. It is essential to include within one's theoretical perspective, not only a means of examining the historical imperatives that pre-figure current educational debate, but also it must be possible to account for the complexity and internal struggle which are an essential part of gender and class reproduction. Connell et al's research is important in as much as it is able to capture the dynamic of family life, together with the different ways in which a variety of forms of family life come into contact with schools. Alison Kelly (1982) in an article written in the British Journal of Sociology of Education uses a different form of analysis. This paper is part of the GIST project and is concerned with the relationship between parents' expectations of their children's experience of

schooling and occupational aspirations. The researchers attempted to collect information from 116 parents of first year secondary children.

The questionnaire covered such areas as educational and occupational aspirations, views on sexual equality and out of school activities, and also inquired about household tasks undertaken by the children. The children were also asked about the nature of household tasks undertaken by their parents. All the statistics were analysed across male/female division. Ninety two questionnaires were returned and twenty four interviews were conducted. Eighty four percent of the girls' parents returned questionnaires and seventy three of the boys' parents returned questionnaires. Kelly et al (1982) wanted to collect this information in order to try and examine the effect of parents' expectations upon women's education. Her special concern was with encouraging girls to choose science and craft subjects, and she wanted to know the views of parents about the future careers of their daughters. After examining the theoretical material available Kelly (1982) writes "Feminist theorists such as David (1980) and McDonald (1980) have explored the "family education couple" and examined the implications of reproduction theory for understanding women's education. As yet this work is necessarily tentative because of the shortage of relevant empirical studies".

At a later stage I will examine Kelly's findings more closely, I would like at this point to draw attention to one of her more important conclusions. In her discussion Kelly suggests that parents' future career expectations of their children are highly ambiguous. Their ideas and their behaviour are often contradictory, especially in the area where an ideology of equality is expressed. On a questionnaire parents had high aspirations for their daughters but the jobs of nurse, secretary, social worker and hairdresser were considered more suitable for girls than for boys (1). When all the evidence was examined Kelly (1982) discovered that most parents accepted that men and women have fundamentally different roles in the family. It was decided that the everyday assumptions concerned with the ways in which family life, and especially the tasks of a sexually divided 'family labour force' were organised had more influence on children's socialisation into stereotypical male and female roles than any expressed ideas about gender equality collected through the questionnaires. On the whole 'equality' like 'education' was considered a 'good thing' but "when asked most parents endorsed equality, but when not thinking about it their actions are very different. Equality is a little something extra which can be added on to existing social arrangements".

This is not entirely untrue within schools where teachers again will endorse a policy of equality of opportunity only to reproduce or reconstitute practices



which already are established within the household. These tasks are clearly set out in table form and we can see that household tasks such as washing up, some types of cleaning (boys are twice as likely to be asked to clean windows than the house) and cooking are divided along divisions which anticipate future roles; women with major responsibility within the home, and men doing household tasks associated with technical or mechanical skills. (79% of parents said that girls and boys should do the same household tasks. Only 29% of these 11 year old boys compared to 72% of the girls, regularly helped in the washing up. A significantly higher proportion of girls also helped with cleaning the house, cooking and tidying their own rooms. And girls were more likely than boys to be found washing, and mending clothes and keeping the table. Boys more often than girls took out the rubbish, washed the car, did the gardening, helped with repairs and cleaned shoes. Parents' ideas on sexual equality suggest that it is inevitable that boys and girls will have different roles in adult life (2).

The advantage of Connell (1985) et al's work is that they show the different structures that shape the form of family life. This is especially true in the section "Three Families: Patriarchy Eroded". Here we can see how due to changing economic situations the organisation of the family centres around the mother. In an important paragraph we can see how Dr Somerset, Sally

Somerset's mother sacrificed her own medical career when it came into conflict with the demands of her husband's career. In later life Dr Somerset deeply regretted this decision and has ensured that her daughter attends a girls' private school and has influenced her daughter's educational progress insisting that she tries for university and encouraging her to delay any marriage plans. Whilst it is not surprising that we are faced with a middle class girl's aspirations towards a career in medicine, it is unusual to find that it is her mother who insists on delaying marriage plans in favour of a career. We do not know how Sally's parents negotiated this situation, but from the description we can clearly see that Dr Somerset is encouraging her daughter to gain more economic and emotional control over her life than she experienced in her early marriage.

In turning to the material produced by the girls I would like to begin by showing how the girls are placed within situations in which they experience different parental expectations and how they resolve the tension that exists, not only between male and female adults within the home, but also between the ways in which brothers and sisters are often treated unequally. For the moment I will concentrate upon the contradictions which arise within the lived experience of girls from all social classes. It goes without saying that the discussions and negotiations constructed by the family members are a response to situations presented by larger forces which exist outside the closely knit unit of family

relationships. Continually within the family, as well as in classrooms, members of the group are negotiating who has access to specific areas of control and authority. Participants discuss and argue over resources and it is within these sets of power relations that forms of gender identity are constructed, re-negotiated, and re-formed. Arnot (1984) argues "the child is the mediator, the go between carrying the class cultural messages of the home and the school through the school gates each day, influencing each in turn of his or her own practices and responses. It is this notion that needs to be captured in the accounts of schooling under capitalism".

In the introduction I have attempted to present some of the ways in which I have analysed the construction of the family. This position is informed by the work of Arnot (1984), Kelly (1982) and Connell (1985) et al. I hope that I have succeeded in emphasising the fact that there are different patterns of gender reproduction within different classes, but that these patterns come into conflict with structures of patriarchal control. Patriarchy is often characterised by similar patterns of control which primarily divide men and women irrespective of class association.

In the following section I am going to look in close detail at the social relations of family life as they have affected the girls in this study. I hope I will be

able to show how the girls cope with the contradiction of family aspirations for academic achievement with the imposition of specific definitions of femininity. There are also contradictions between the work of the family and the work of the school. Schools are directing all students towards employment but for girls this distinction is constrained by the notion of domesticity. But schools too have to respond to the different values, expectations and cultures of family life. I hope that my observations will assist us in our understanding of how girls and boys are not part of the same cycle of reproduction. All children come to education from some form of family organisation but it is girls who become part of the "family, school, family cycle".

#### The social relations of family life

"We use our parents like recurring dreams, to be entered into when needed, they are always there for love and hate"

In the following pages I want to look at some of the conflicts which arose between the girls and their parents, the class differences and the pattern of patriarchal or matriarchal control. In certain examples we will see that both schools and parents had similar expectations whilst in others there was a distance between bourgeois values associated with school expectations and the culture of families who came from different backgrounds.

There is an example too of how a working class family responds to a situation in which we can see how some of the characteristics of racism are reproduced. We see a conflict not only between what occurs within school but conflict between male and female members of the family.

During our writing sessions I encouraged the girls to think and write about relationships within the family. In all the writings the relationship between the girls and their mothers was predominant. When looking at the current literature concerned with the inner life of the family it is interesting to find that women choose to write about their mothers, in preference to either their fathers or their brothers and sisters. I know of one book which is concerned with the ways in which daughters perceive their fathers; "Fathers: Reflections by Daughters" Owen, U (1982) but there is a multitude of material relating to the relationships between mothers and daughters ( ). It is very difficult to write about the father who is often experienced as the patriarch, always in control, representing social power within the family. It is not easy to write about the experience of paternal authority. As Adrienne Rich describes the relationship as almost a 'law of nature'. "Patriarchy is the power of the fathers, a familial, social and political system in which men ... determine what part women shall or shall not play and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male".

But let us look now at the ways in which some of the girls' written accounts give us information about how they experience the intense inner life of the family.

It has been suggested earlier that the family when analysed as a set of social and power relations is composed of members who have differing access to resources, different roles within the family, and each family member is in a different relationship to the source of economic power. It is usually the father in the family who is in a position to sell his labour power, and he is supported in this function by the labour of his wife and sometimes his children, often his daughters. Within this unit children have to negotiate their class and gender identities and this is often accompanied by stress and tension and can be seen from the following account entitled "I could hardly look at my parents" (3).

"The most stressful situation I have experienced was last year, after the 'O' levels I decided I wanted to leave school and go on to sixth form college. This decision was not accepted by my parents. We shouted, tried to reason, cried and moaned but a level of understanding seemed to be out of reach. They had decided that I was staying at school, even after I had arranged and gone through with an interview at college which accepted me. Those two weeks were sheer hell. I could hardly look at my parents, I hated them, they resented me - our relationship had broken down".

I still resent the fact that they used their power over me to force me into a situation I was not at ease with. The stress was broken when I was just too tired to uphold my arguments" (148).

When analysing this experience there is an over powering sense that the writer is attempting to escape from the control which she feels her parents have over her continuing education. Finally the writer is worn down with the effort of trying to persuade her parents that she wants to organise her future educational plans, and cohesion can only begin when the daughter complies with the wishes of her parents. Looking closely at the script we can also see that although the parents may feel they have succeeded their daughter still contains a certain degree of resentment about the fact that she complied with their wishes. In my analysis I am endeavouring to see how family members negotiate their positions within highly specific social relations and to give not only evidence but lively instances to our understanding of the often quoted expression of "lived experience".

The parents, in this instance, are obviously united in their resistance to their daughter's desire to leave school, they form an alliance which the less powerful daughter challenges but this challenge is defeated. We can now see why adulthood and economic power comes together in a combination which places severe constraint upon the young woman. In actually applying for, and

gaining, a place at a sixth form college we can see that the writer showed a certain amount of autonomy from her family. The writer has attempted to take her own education seriously. This situation is not specifically a gender issue, it could be an example of generational conflict but whatever the outcome of her struggle with her parents she has attempted to act independently and these actions will have affected the dynamics within the family. We have no direct evidence concerning the impact that the writer's action had upon her capacity to resist any other interference in her decision making. I could tentatively suggest that maybe her parents thought that the sixth form of a girls' school was a safer place for their rebellious daughter, thus ensuring some control not only over her sexual encounters, but also ensuring that their daughter gained academic results which would mean entrance, not only to university, but also to a more secure economic future. I would imply that the daughter has been the 'go between' responsible for carrying both the class and gender culture of the home and the school. This written account will illustrate how the practices of both school and home influence one another simultaneously. As Madeleine Arnot (1984) argues "it is this notion that needs to be captured in the accounts of schooling under capitalism".

There are numerous references to the tensions experienced within the home, many connected with the



daughter's failure to support the mother in the arduous task of physically maintaining the household. Typical of these phrases are "my mother often moans about my friends but the worst thing of all is that if anything goes wrong in the house I always get blamed for it". ("Girls Getting It Together" 1984, page 52). And another writer attending the same youth club wrote "my mother is always moaning at me when I go out every night instead of helping her more in the house". ("Girls Getting It Together" 1984, page 52).

In a longer piece of writing one of the girls who attended the same youth club which was situated on a council house estate (there is a detailed description of the youth club and its situation in Chapter 1) writes about an area of conflict in the family concerned with the fact that she likes to go out socially with the black boys in her class. In previous discussions she had spoken about the differences in opinion between her parents over her association with the black community. Her father, who worked with black men, had no objections to these friendships but her mother strongly disapproved. The girl herself writes about this problem "Another worst thing about my mother is that she doesn't like me hanging around with coloured mates and she won't let me go out with coloured boys. I get on better with coloured boys than I do with white boys. My mom nags at me a lot and always criticises me. If I want to go anywhere with my coloured mates I have to be in half an hour to an hour earlier than I do with my white mates.

I can't seem to speak to my mom about my problems. I don't have many problems. The only problem I have is going out with boys as I have only been with coloured boys and my mum doesn't like it" (4).

Again it is evident that the writer is struggling to negotiate with her parents, especially her mother, a choice over the type of relationships she wishes to construct with the black boys in her class. In group discussions it was also obvious that the other girls in the group had mixed opinions about her friendships with these boys. She was a well thought out girl who always argued her situation clearly and quietly. It would seem in this family the daughter had gained a certain restricted amount of independence from parental constraint, even though the time she could spend with the black boys was controlled by her parents, especially her mother. In my analysis of the ways in which this confrontation is resolved I have relied upon the family as a set of power relations. It is unlikely that a son put in this position would have to tolerate the same set of restrictions. It is also crucial to realise that these negotiations take place within a context of racial oppression which adds further dimensions to the analysis.

In another piece of writing the same writer describes her observations about the ways in which the black boys do not help one another when faced with a threatening

situation. The writer points to the different strategies employed by the black girls. She also notices that there is a boundary between the solidarity of the black girls and herself as a white girl who wishes to be seen as non-racist.

"The worst thing about school is teachers often come out with remarks about you and your family and they will occasionally hit you if they haven't got any patience. In my year at school (5th year) we have only got a couple of coloured boys and about five to six coloured girls but if a coloured boy in a year gets picked on in school the other lads leave it up to him to sort it out for himself, yet if a coloured girl gets picked on which hardly ever happens all the coloured girls stick together and the white girls in my school don't stick together. I'm not racist at all as I often stick up for my coloured mates and I go out with coloured boys but one coloured girl I know thinks I'm racist and she won't get it in her head that I'm not racist but it doesn't bother me as I can defend myself and stick up for myself without anybody else's help" (page 51) (5).

My analysis would be inadequate if I were to suggest a direct correspondence between the writer's intransigent stand against her mother's opposition to her association with black boys and her observations that "coloured girls stick together". I would however suggest that out of a particular set of power relationships within her family the writer has been put into a situation in which

racism has become an issue. She has had to face opposition in her desire to go out with black boys, but she is also facing control over her movement as a woman. The writer when encountering a united opposition presented by the black girls (as they resisted the imposition of teacher authority) is placed in a position of trying to make sense of parental attitudes and also a particular interaction which occurs between teachers and black female students. Not only are we observing the different social class and gender messages received by the writer, we are also having to place these writings in a context of racial oppression. Madeleine Arnot argues (1984) "the school and the family can have a range of different types of relationships, which cannot be easily described ... schools can 'add to' by reinforcing family culture. They can also act against family and thus cause contradiction and conflict for the child". The whole direction of this thesis, in looking at the perceptions of young women writers, is an attempt to identify the variety of consistent and inconsistent ways in which the writers received both class and gender messages in the context particularly of their homes and within their schools. It is crucial to this study, remembering that over half of the participants are either black British or daughters of Asian parents, that not only am I analysing the processes which contribute to the reproduction of class and gender relations, I am also investigating the reproduction of racism.

It would be inappropriate and inaccurate to suggest that all the female writers in this study have had similar experiences within the British educational system. Career choices, parental and cultural factors have already influenced their expectations as women. It is necessary to state that racism is possibly the most significant influence upon Black and Asian students. For girls sexism and class background have also determined their experiences both in school and in society.

Bryan, Dadzie and Scofe (1985) have drawn attention to the fact that, after slavery, education was seen in the Caribbean as a means of escape from poverty and exploitation. It was Black women who organised basic schooling in the Caribbean.

"There were women from the churches who set up school and taught you. They were like Victorian schools, where things were beaten into you .... There was a real lack of material for kids at home. I don't remember having any books that you could say all the class got ... My grandmother did a lot to keep that atmosphere at home. She used to give my brother and I some very long recitations to learn - long poems, about four or five pages long"

As women Black mothers, together with all nurturers have been seen as carers of children. The Afro-Caribbean writers in this study will probably have been in the

charge of a Black child minder before they entered school. This is the cheapest form of full-time child care in the inner city. Mothers have also taken the initiative when confronting white teachers about individual and institutionalised racism. None of the Black or Asian writers in this study isolated instances of racist abuse but it can be assumed that had I been a Black or Asian researcher they may have indicated that verbal, physical and psychological abuse had been part of their everyday experience as Black and Asian females.

It must also be remembered that not only do Black and Asian mothers have to reassure their children when they have been victims of racist abuse they themselves may be experiencing similar attacks in their place of employment.

Education, access to training and careers is of curcial importance for all women if they are to escape the restrictive life of the household. For Black and Asian women the struggle is even more complex. Their lives are structured through unequal economic relations, the imposition of patriarchal power relations and the existence of institutionalised racism.

Two thirds of the writers in this study come from backgrounds where unemployment affects access to material resources, their housing is typical of the

inner city and their parents have little influence on political and economic decisions. Black and Asian girls experiences of those conditions are similar to the other writers but their historical and cultural relations differ enormously.

I hope by looking at the perceptions of the girls that we can catch a glimpse of the ways in which the girls negotiate their responses to a myriad array of messages. It is possible to see that the construction, maintenance and reproduction of gender and racism is a complex and contradictory process.

Kessler et al (1985) draw our attention to these responses "one aspects of the complexity of gender, is the diversity within masculinity and femininity, the biological processes producing male and female bodies interact with a wide range of different family patterns, causes of growth, institutional pressures, and personal choices. The dialectical issues in many emotional attachments, different personality traits, and different ways of participating in social life illustrate the diversity within one milieux".

#### Structures of authority within the school and within the home

In this section I want to examine the ways in which school and families can be seen as socialising agencies. There are obvious class differences in the ways in which

families prepare children for adulthood. And as we have observed in previous discussions there are considerable differences in the ways in which boys and girls are prepared for family membership. I will also refer in this section to the ways in which patriarchal organisation within schools and families affect gender identity. We will also see in this section how gender practices learned in the home are transferred to the school and how often gendered practices accepted in the family are not acceptable within the environment of the school.

In schools students learn how to respect legitimate authority. It is especially significant that boys and girls experience different forms of control both within the school and within the family. The social order of the school is enforced through a system of hierarchical control, usually the organisation of the home is maintained by a set of patriarchal power relations, in which the father, supported by the sons, sustains authority whilst the women and the daughters have to negotiate from a position of financial weakness. I would like now to look at the ways in which both schools and families can be seen as socialising agencies. I use the word socialisation in the sense of producing a fully social adult being. During this process children have to learn to do what they are told, "check their tongues", accept the necessity to do things they don't want to. They learn to defer to older parents and



teachers, and they learn the social order by toeing the line and keeping in place. But of course these processes do not operate smoothly, there is resistance, negotiation and rebellion. The ways in which these processes of maintaining hegemonic authority operate differ between social classes, race is of special significance, and we have already noted that boys and girls experience differing forms of social and sexual control.

Both the structure of the education system and the organisation of the family household are inextricably connected with the division of labour. As we have stated there is a relationship between schooling and the social relations of production. The reproduction of class, race and gender relations takes place primarily within the family and within the school.

Class is not a superficial arbitrary classification system which can be eroded or changed by liberal employers, it is a fundamental set of economic and social relations which regulates every part of our existence. Schooling and forms of family life not only reflect the existence of a divided and stratified class system they also help to constitute and maintain class structure. Erik Olin Wright (1979) demonstrates the significance of class as a primary explanatory device when he examines differences between educational and financial rewards between blacks and whites and between men and women. "In fact the differences in economic,

racial and gender groups are strongly related to where one stands in the class structure. This is not to say that racial and sexual oppression are not real and powerful forces. Rather it is to say that they are dynamically inter-connected with the relations of economic domination and exploitation that exist"

In previous discussions we have observed the ways in which specific cultural patterns and social and economic structures are related and reproduced. I want to continue, in this section of my thesis, to illustrate the patterns of social relations, the language and style, the 'heart' of the experience of how teenage girls live and work out their class and female position within the social order. Class position obviously controls where you stand in the unequal processes of power, control and reproduction but it is also a way of life that is lived out and not a mere reflection of functional processes which are siezed upon by productive forces. In looking at the authority structures of both school and home we can see the ways in which the students and daughters experience relations and tensions which exist between the economic, political and cultural arenas. It is by looking at structures of power and control that we can begin to understand the ways in which a social order reproduces itself. But it is all too easy to fall into the trap of drawing neat lines between processes within the family, which are reinforced within school practices and then appropriated

by the labour market. Not only the evidence, perhaps of our own lives, but the language and experience of the writers in my study show that women negotiate these processes in a variety of ways, there are distinctions between the ways in which black and Asian girls respond to parental and teacher control, and in certain situations we can see that girls from both working and middle class homes experience similar dilemmas.

In attempting to develop a framework for understanding the relationship between personal life and social structure, I have tried to suggest that family and schools are not separate worlds which operate with separate processes. They continually inter-relate affecting each others practices. Connell et al (1982) put it more precisely "the family is what its members do, a constantly continuing and changing practice, and, as children go to and through a school, that practice is reorganised around their schooling. For its part, the organisation of the school varies with the kinds of families in its catchment and the nature of their collective practices".

Our task is to try and establish how social and economic structures produce gendered and classed social subjects. We want to know how social forces "get inside" the human form and produce masculine and feminine persons.

A naive and over simplified account of the ways in which children are 'tamed' within the early years of life is

suggested by the fact that the child encounters the social structure, in the form of the family, and is faced with a form of direction which subdues and directs his or her innate impulses. There is an interaction between emotional impulse and social control and a child's personality is produced as a result of the way in which these crises are resolved. The structure and organisation of the family is reproduced to the extent to which it has had to change as it accommodates new members and different processes. We can see, even from the limited amount of references to family form within the girls' writings, that the family is constructed out of a variety of individuals but the main organising principle is still an exclusive sexual and domestic relationship between one man and one woman. And yet out of these various family forms we do have examples of girls who strongly resist both the demands of schools and the constraints of home. We do not know how one girl in one set of circumstances can make choices which will have long term consequences whilst another will accept the constraints of an early arranged marriage and live with the consequences. Sartre (1977) has suggested that we are "condemned to be free". We make choices, but those choices are made under incredible constraint. For my part I am interested in the constraints placed upon our choices in the form of processes of class and gender construction which takes place within patriarchal power relations. Connell et al (1982) are helpful here with their over simplified but vivid paragraph in which

we see people as active constructors of what they have become and are becoming. "Yet there is a danger ... that social structures will seem to be inhuman and external forces contrasted with a really human realm of individual choice. Our image of person and society becomes that of a flea freely hopping around inside a cage and though that may produce fine dramas about fleas, it isn't very helpful if our concern is to do something about the cage".

One way of resolving this situation is to examine the ways in which we come to make our choices as men and women in the context of social relations. These processes take place within deeply complicated and intricate sets of relations and it is extremely difficult to reveal the ways in which "social forces get inside people", producing such distinctly differentiated subjects as male and female.

By using the material produced by the girls I would like to isolate some of their responses to the numerous ways in which school and home control and manipulate their future destinies. In this first piece of writing it is evident that the teenager, when a mother herself, intends to have a very strong socialising influence over her child. It is interesting in this account that she refers always to the bond between herself and her child, not including husband or grandparents. The expectation here is that the mother/child relationship will be a major socialising agency through which the child will

learn appropriate behaviour. There is an emphasis upon a wiser adult person who will be supportive in the event of a crisis.

Maybe the writer has experienced this type of relationship with her mother, or seen examples of close and supportive mother/daughter relationships. It is important to remember that when a child enters school he or she brings with them all these experiences of socialisation which have directed (or controlled) his or her attitudes to authority and expectations from adults. This example shows how the mother has absorbed and experiences a set of power relations within the family and how she in turn, having accepted her position within the family form, reproduces a relationship in which she not only cares for a child but is also responsible for "teaching it right and wrong in life".

"The best thing about being a mother is looking after your children and watching them grow up from the age of about six months with their rattles and models. There is the experience of the first time the child says something or takes its first step. It's good to see your love and attention with the child when the child grows up, teaching it right and wrong in life and how to be independent, caring and giving advice. You teach the child something from your experience. When you're a mother your children kind of look on you for advice and mother helps in a hard situation.

When the child grows up and is having his or her own children and getting married, the mother can give advice about married life and how to cope when things go wrong. Mothers always give good advice when their children are setting out in life" (page 85) (6). Perhaps the writer has learned to respond favourably to the demands of her own mother's desire for a well behaved and compliant daughter. We do not know whether or not these attitudes were transferred to the authority structure of the school.

Within teaching and within the family it is the educational role of women that is important. A large part of the educational role, especially at primary level, is concerned with health, cleanliness, socialisation of appropriate values and behaviours. It may be possible to suggest that the division of labour amongst primary teachers and the sexual division of labour within the family are essential elements which contribute to the cultural reproduction of gender relations.

Girls are often controlled by what is expected of them and both the home and the school may unconsciously be preparing girls for partnership, motherhood and a limited and poorly paid position within the labour force. S Spinks (1969) remarks upon the relationship between female docility and conformity as being seen as a sign of maturity.

"The girl internalizes a definition of maturity which is the early acceptance of quietness, obedience and poise. Because these are character traits instilled in her from the time she is one, and because they correspond to the demands of the school system, she often does better in school. Which is why she's called more mature".

Whilst boys are also being controlled and constrained in a bid to produce a particular masculinity which will be seized upon by capitalist forces, girls are receiving approval for a different form of conformity. In the following piece of writing there are references to the different forms of clothing which are considered appropriate for boys and those more appropriate for girls. These grievances are repeated in other accounts, such as "I would love to come to school dressed in jeans, trousers and jacket" (page 6) and the things that this writer hates about school, amongst other things is "being sent home to change my clothes" (page 5). Remarking upon the differences in treatment between boy/girl discipline over uniform one writer says "some boys wear tight trousers, so why can't girls?" and another angrily writes "boys don't get told off as much about their clothes as the girls do" (page 4) (7).

But to return to an earlier reference I made in which it was suggested that simultaneously boys and girls faced different forms of social control within school as they are prepared for different sets of social relationships within domestic and labour environments.



"Girls get sent home more often than the boys because they do not wear the correct uniform. When the boys do not wear the correct uniform they do not really get sent home as often as the girls. Girls are not really supposed to act any differently from the boys but they are meant to act sensibly. In our school the girls are supposed to be equal to the boys but when the teachers need something heavy to be moved they always ask the boys to move them, never the girls. They seem to think that we are weak and are not capable of moving heavy objects. The girls do not get on with the boys" (page 7)..

It is often the differential treatment received by boys and girls that have enormous consequences in the construction of gender identities. In the 'writings' there are many references, especially within co-educational establishments, to the ways in which girls are treated with regard to clothing, sexually appropriate behaviour, harassment, and even subjected to physical violence. I would like now to try to establish the points at which this treatment is re-inforced within the family and the points at which we can see disjuncture between school authority structures and the power relations operating within the family. I am defining the family as a set of power relations in which men are set against women, parents command authority over children and there is rivalry between male and female children. I also do not see the school as a continuing unity of repressive mechanisms. Schools,

like all organisations, depend upon hierarchical structures of management and there are contesting sets of power relations within those layers of power. Men and women teachers are often in antagonistic relationships, and subjects are divided by high and low status. What I want to show now is the extent to which gendered practices, learned within the home are adapted, modified or transmitted within the organisation of the school. We can then attempt to expose how some of the processes experienced within home and school are intricately related to the reproduction of a socially divided domestic organisation of labour within the home and a sexual division of labour within production. In order to achieve this we will not be looking at the immediately obvious ways in which daughters model themselves upon their mothers or how boys imitate the masculine behaviour of their fathers. I want to look at the subtleties and the contradictory situations in which the girls had to hold together various tensions and make sense of what was happening to them as they encountered the authority and control mechanisms operating within both the school and the household. By using this strategy it may be possible to indicate the ways in which both power relations in the school and family produce forms of gender and class identity which are not only related to class relations but are also constrained by patriarchal power.

The first examples that I have selected shows the different ways in which boys and girls are treated with regard to the wearing of trousers in schools. In this school it is not concerned with the fact that the girls wear trousers (the majority of the students are Asian) the controlling of the trousers is related to their tightness. It is worth noting that Asian parents and the school had come to an agreement about the fact that the girls were allowed to wear black trousers. It is interesting to observe that conditions about girls' clothing are far more closely controlled than conditions which apply to the boys. It is also significant that the writers refer constantly to the restrictions placed upon jewellery, eye shadow and hair colour. My evidence is inadequate but I would be interested to discover what areas of style, clothing, length of hair were controlled in the case of the boys. I only had written data from the girls and they often could only relate to how they felt about the differences in the ways in which rules about clothing were applied to boys and girls.

"I like school but I hate the rules. Once I remember when I only had one pair of trousers and I wore it to school to a Maths lesson. She saw me in them and told me to go out of the room. I told her that it was the only pair I had but she would not listen. So for the rest of the week I worked outside and later got a new pair of trousers. Life at school is just not fair for me and my friends. Every time our year tutor sees us in jeans, shades or make up he will send us home. I bet he

wouldn't do that to his children. Some boys wear tight trousers, so why can't the girls?" (8)..

It is only evident in this excerpt, but in other pieces of writing, that the school controls the types of trousers which can be worn by boys and those worn by girls. In another piece of writing the girl refers to the fact that "when boys do not wear the uniform they do not really get sent home as often as the girls" (page 7)..

In the longer piece I would like to suggest that not only is the school dictating particular requirements concerned with uniformity, it is also stating that girls are conditioned by yet another more feminine form of appropriate uniform. (But of course the line is very fine as too elegant a form would also be disciplined!) It is also significant that boys who wear tight trousers are not sent home.

Another point which the teacher completely disregards is the financial arrangements that dictates whether or not the daughter can buy a new pair of trousers. It seems that money became available towards the end of the week when she bought an acceptable pair of trousers.

As the writer attended school in the 'offending' clothing, but was isolated from her class by having to work outside the classroom, it seems that her parents in

sending her to school did not find the clothing offensive. It would seem that parents of the girl were happy to send their daughter to school wearing her only pair of trousers, whilst the school were applying gender specific rules connected to what was considered appropriate uniform.

As I am interested in the response of the girls to the tensions and contradictory messages received both from within the family household and the school authority structure I find it important to notice that the writer continues to attend school, that she highlights the injustice that exists between the treatment of boys and girls over issues concerned with uniform, and that she also isolates the fact that she thinks teachers, as parents, would apply a different set of rules when confronted with their own children. It's difficult to assess whether she draws boundaries because she is an Asian girl or whether she thinks that teachers and their children are in a different relationship, or whether she feels that middle class children do not have to face the same forms of constraint. Another relevant detail, especially as we are considering the ways in which the writers are attempting to negotiate gender identities through surrounding contradictions, is the fact that it is both men and women teachers who are writing in their definition about the appropriateness of specific designs of trousers for boys and girls. There is no division between how the family and the daughter perceive what they consider to be suitable clothing for school. Their

main consideration may be the organisation of the family income which will provide finance to buy their daughter another pair of trousers. The daughter continues to attend school probably knowing that money will become available. In attending school and being isolated from her group she has realised that teachers, both male and female, apply differential rules to boys and girls. It is just as important, when we analyse this written account, that we go beyond the obvious injustice of this incident and try and deepen our understanding as we unravel the processes, that not only put the writer into this position, but also the ways in which she makes comprehensible a series of ambiguous messages transmitted by the school but which are not re-inforced within the family.

It is very difficult to unravel the unconscious organisation of the school's authority system. It works and infiltrates so many aspects of school life. Sometimes teachers assume that boys and girls have different interests, abilities and future destinies. Girls, without being active participants, sometimes are controlled by what is expected of them by teachers and parents. It is not only the more obvious areas of different rules of behaviour, differences in dress and manners, but we can also see that the organisation of the classroom materials, curricula options and space available to boys and girls is often organised in such a way that girls are disadvantaged. But more importantly

the students are faced with a perception of a social order which relies not only upon patriarchal and hierarchical structures of power and responsibility but also a social order in which students in the 'A' streams are saved from the common fate of either low paid jobs, Y.T.S. programmes, or the prospect of unemployment. Such a complex system of interrelated processes produces a multitude of responses. As Connell (1982) et al clearly observe "the school is an institution that is a power structure. It is capable of intimidating and grinding people down and it often generates resentment and resistance. Depending on circumstances, this can develop into severe problems of authority, whose effects generate through a school".

One of the writers shows an instance when she certainly felt intimidated and ground down by the accusation of stealing. The feeling of unjust treatment 'shouts' through her written description.

"The worst incident that happened to me when I was accused of theft from British Home Stores, although the teacher had a description of the person who actually done the theft and gave my name and address. The teacher kept trying to catch me out by asking what lessons I had - what teacher I had - and things like - what things did I do (the work). I asked the teacher if I could ask my parents to come to school and sort it out properly but she refused.

The teacher had the description and the description read, My Name, What clothes I was wearing. My hair colour. The only thing what was right was my name and address. I did not wear black and did not have brown hair. After chasing all round the school asking the teachers if I was in lessons and checking the register she finally did not even apologise. This really got me mad. She knew all the time it was not me but because I was the idiot in the class (made them laugh) she still said it was me. My mother came up and she said she had said sorry but she never. I never forgot this ....."

(page 46) (9).

My intention in selecting this piece of writing together with the next piece of work is to show that the girls experienced an enormous sense of resentment at their treatment and that although the school may have succeeded in maintaining a particular form of hegemonic power by operating all its prestige in negotiation with the store, of insisting on finding the thief, and of attempting to enlist the co-operation of all the teaching staff, the girl refused to be bullied into admitting to a theft for which she was not responsible. The girl insisted upon the support of her parents, especially the word of her mother, and we can surmise that the school had to accommodate the united challenge to its authority when it was discovered that the girl was in school at the time of the theft. It could be assumed that as a result of this incident hegemonic control within the school was being reconstructed, maybe



dismantled and re-ordered if the parents had successfully attacked the school for its appalling treatment. But this may not have been necessary as the school was in such a strong position it could dismiss not only the pain experienced by the student but also deny the mother an apology.

The previous account clearly demonstrates the fact that schools can exert authority not only over students but also certain parents, especially working class women. In the next recorded incident the events are more related to specifically gender issues as the incident relates to an item of female clothing. We encounter a girl who attacks her PE teacher over yet another false accusation. In this account the girl strongly defends her position and by her resistance pushes the teacher into new areas where she is having to find different ways of responding to the student whilst remaining in authority.

"The worst thing that happened to me in my new school was when I went to my PE lesson and I had had arguments on the PE teacher before but she never got me really mad so I wouldn't really shout at her and I walked into my lesson and she asked me where my PE blouse and pumps were and I told her I'd forgotten them so I went into my lesson and she started shouting at me and she said that she had got my PE shirt in her office and asked me whose I was wearing. I told her it was my sisters and she started accusing me of robbing it and she was saying why have you forgotten it, why, why why and I turned round

and said I don't know. I didn't do it on purpose, she started asking me questions. I got really mad and shouted "what do you think I am - a bloody dictionary". She said "And I don't like your blouse" and told me to get out, when she came in she said "I think you owe me an apology or are you going to add to your rudeness". I said "Yes" and she said "Come on then" and I shouted 'sorry'. She said "I don't think that's good enough" and I said "Well it will have to be". I said "And you've got the cheek to say you don't like my blouse". I said "When you pay for it you can say whether you like it or not" I said "But you don't so you can shut up". Then she said "Get outside my office". And I said "Don't worry I'm going" AND THAT WAS THAT!" (page 48) (10).

By this writer's resistance, together with the previous writer's account, we are made aware of the fact that girls do challenge the existing hierarchical set of social relations, and that their intervention and resistance to the authority system helps to shape and define the character of struggles between female students and female staff. These struggles between staff and students are so often centred around issues connected with dress, appearance, appropriate forms of male and female behaviour. Unfortunately the impact of these struggles is not such that female or student resistance is ever likely to overthrow the processes of social class reproduction. It is a case of renegotiating and adjusting the balance between the

forces of authority and the subordinate groups.

In order to maintain hegemonic dominance it is expedient for the staff to use their authority in a pragmatic unpredictable way. In this way the students are unaware of which direction the axe is going to swing thus rendering them powerless to respond. Again Connell R W et al (1982) make acute observations related to this issue "most of the kids don't argue for more controls over themselves, but they raise the issue of authority in another way: their powerful resentment of unfair treatment by teachers. We found that the arbitrary use of authority is the most deeply felt, as well as the most wide spread criticism of school made by students we talked to".

The last two examples, taken from the girls' writings, have emphasised the ways in which the writers have come in contact with and reacted to the authority structures of the school.

The following accounts help us to understand how the girls were situated between parental anxiety about examination success, which is supported by the educational establishment, and their own ambiguity about the relevance of examinations as being important for their future.

But first I would like to situate these accounts in an

analysis which seeks to demonstrate that the academic curriculum offered by a selective girls grammar school is related to the structure of gender relations which operate in the wider world of economic production. It was expected that all the writers who came to the writers group at 'Vicarage' would gain places at university. The school selected its students by examination at eleven and was single sex. The girls were caught in a system which encouraged competitive achievement which was tempered with a type of femininity which took into account possible futures as wives of professional husbands. The direction was shaped by careers as teachers, social workers, journalists, doctors but it is obvious to see in their writing there was a strong resistance by a small group of girls to such a destiny. I will develop those strands at a later stage but would like to continue with an exploration of the notion that the academic curriculum is constructed around a variety of principles which rely upon the concept of authority. The degree of success anticipated by the girls in gaining academic rewards relies upon the authority of university disciplines. The girls, encouraged by their female teachers, are competing for a university place in which they will encounter an academic curriculum which is based upon knowledge that reflects practices and institutions controlled by men. We find that the girls of 'Vicarage' compete for a place within the university they will also have to resolve a situation in which those who call themselves feminists are pursuing an academic curriculum which expresses the

perspective of the dominant class and organised by the dominant sex.

The girls at "Vicarage" were familiar with areas of knowledge which had been divided into subject areas each discipline following discrete clearly distinguished 'rationalities' and based upon specific principles. In order to be successful it was very important that the girls 'learned' how to master the rules of each discipline and how to argue their case. As Eisenstein and Jardine (1985), Marks and de Courtivron (1981) Spender D (1988), Stanley L and Wise S (1983) and Roberts H (1981) suggest female consciousness often expresses itself in altogether different ways than those contained in male controlled and male constructed "bodies of knowledge". Their work reminds us that meaning is socially constructed and should not be subjected to universal patriarchal rules. They indicate that it is important that women explore the ways in which they construct their everyday lives. This may reveal that in order to understand their position vis a vis men women will have to look at previously stigmatised types of expression such as female gossip, domestic dialogue exchanged between women and perhaps just as crucially they may have to investigate their silence. What I would like to suggest is that the following accounts were written by highly competitive girls who were manipulating an academic curriculum. In order to clarify the position I would like to define the

curriculum as an expression of a relationship between knowledge and language which was negotiated within the constraints of hegemonic patriarchy. We can see from the following account that the writer has to exert considerable effort in order to approach examination taking. "It's funny, but once I am getting into revising a subject, I enjoy it, and I wonder how I could ever loathe the task. I usually set myself a process for taking in work and once I get into the rhythm it's easy.

Unfortunately I'm really apathetic when everybody else discusses revision and tells you how much they've done I feel really jealous and guilty when I think I haven't done anything and I start to panic. My worst habit is cramming! It sickens me to think that I could stoop to such a low form of working" (page 164) (11).

Another writer expresses the terror of not having learned the required response to the question.

"The middle of the exam, the most important question on that paper and my mind goes blank. The next feeling is anger. I'd revised all my work thoroughly but had no knowledge which could be applied in any way whatsoever to this question. The reason that I didn't know the necessary information" (page 164) (12).

The next piece of writing shows the physical reaction induced by the fear of failing examinations. It would not be an understatement to suggest that at examination time we see a concentration by both students and staff

upon evaluating one of the primary objectives of the whole schooling processes that of reproducing an adequately certificated group of people ready to occupy specific places within the production process and within the home. In the process of acquiring these qualifications however boys and girls have been prepared in a contradictory way, but for the moment I have selected some more examples of the tension and anxiety which the writers feel when attempting to gain qualifications ... "sitting outside the little room I have experienced the most uncontrollable shaking and sweating in my life. The sheer importance of a pass or fail, and the opportunity to retake any exam also pass me by. The stress here is on the whole the fear of failure the desire to do well the first time round and not be the object of ridicule" (page 163) (13).

And another writer describes the unnaturalness of taking exams and again refers to the physical changes in her physiology. It would be interesting to see if boys would refer to the physical sensations experienced when put in a situation of stress.

"I felt sick, sweaty and angry. Eczema was riddling its way over my hands and knees and my face had cracked up and gone because of it. I just wanted to jump into a lake and swim and be clean. It was probably something to do with exams; something I've never yet been quite able to come to terms with. I remember waking up on the

morning of the exam and trying to convince myself I was dreaming. I didn't want to talk to anyone, say or do anything. Walking into the exam room was dreadful. You sit and watch the paper blistered with words and you reply to them as best you can, spew all the knowledge your brain can on to the paper and feel really drained at the end. I wonder why?" (page 162) (14).

In an attempt to relieve the anxiety one writer shares some photographs of herself and themselves. "One thing helped relieve the tension. I had sent off a film from my camera, and the pictures came back on the first day of the exams, including some very amusing ones of my friends. Then they didn't know how I could be in a happy mood on such a morning, I showed them the pictures, and laughing together did ease the situation" (page 163) (15).

It is not uncommon for women to seek reassurance through humour, solidarity with others who have experienced similar sets of circumstances, or to relieve stress through seeking out the company of women. I have pointed out earlier that the traditional organisation of the curriculum and its accompanying teaching style neglects the experience of most minority groups and is dominated not only by the values of the dominant culture but controlled by male perceptual thinking and evaluation.



The two writers that I have referred to were both highly intelligent women, had been influenced by feminism, and were also competitive and discriminating. They were aware of their dilemma and their writing reflects some of the tension. These girls certainly co-operated by taking their examinations, applying to university and complying with the expectations of school and family. They resisted by belonging to CND, Amnesty and Young Socialists. They would have preferred a teaching approach which was collaborative, co-operative and interactive which may have also expressed more clearly the experience of female existence.

In selecting these writings I have observed that the writing produced at "Vicarage" reflected a desire on behalf of the girls to achieve good results at 'A' level. As we can see, in all cases, the pursuit of this objective was accompanied by a high degree of anxiety which indicates the significance placed upon success by teachers and parents and the students themselves. At this particular point I do not wish to discuss the ways in which middle class and working class girls come to terms with parental and educational pressure to conform with constructions of female identity.

In the next example the parents assume that their daughter will be successful as she takes her 'O' levels. They do not realise that their daughter is not altogether convinced that exam success is that important. But as Connell et al (1982) argues "families

produce people ... and they produce them under often "terrible constraints", including the constraints imposed by existing class and gender relations in society". If we develop this observation it may mean that the writer, although unsure of whether her parents views on exam success are applicable, will probably take the exams and comply with the expectations of both her school and her family. Again despite her reservations the girl will probably follow the direction implied by Connell (1982) "the impact of such strategies, nevertheless, is not one which is likely to destroy the processes of social class reproduction".

"When we took our 'O' levels I was very worried as I was expected to get all 'A' grades. I had always done well in previous exams, but people always feel that whatever public exams they take are going to be really important, and will affect their lives etc, etc. My parents tried to be helpful by saying "You do well anyway" but this didn't really do much for me. My mother thought I'd start revising too late, and I know she didn't like my habit of 'cramming' the night before at twelve o'clock.

I think worst of all was the high expectation; even though I did do well I became superstitious, like touching wood, crossing my fingers before the exam, things I never do in normal life" (page 163) (16).

In looking at the cycle which directs girls from the family to the school, to employment and to domestic life I hope that I have isolated some instances in which we have been able to see how the girls have attempted to make sense of the messages they have received, both within the family and within their schools. The process of socialisation does not occur within separate spheres, it is a simultaneous process which occurs both within family life and the educational establishment. I hope that the 'writings' have identified the contradictions which occur for girls when they experience a different set of expectations as a female, I hope that it is also clear that at times their parents do not share the same sets of values, and that male and female members of the family are treated differently.

All students from minority groups or from working class culture are disadvantaged by the organisation of a bourgeois curriculum, girls are particularly disadvantaged as their experience as women is silenced or undermined. Working class girls often have to face different authority structures within their schools and families, whilst female students who are feminists are faced with the contradiction of co-operating with an educational system which is both patriarchal and organised on bourgeois principles. Some of the girls are constrained by academic expectations whilst others are controlled by cultural expectations. All the girls in this study were affected by a socialisation process which associated women with domesticity.

I hope that I have also been able to demonstrate how patriarchal power operates within the family and how the organisation of knowledge is male defined.

In the next chapter I hope to examine the ways in which women's lives are circumscribed by domestic labour and a subordinate position within waged labour.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. KELLY A et al, "Gender roles at home and school", British Journal of Sociology of Education, Vol 3, No 3, 1982.

Table III Mean ratings of the suitability of various occupations for their children

	Girls		Boys	
Nurse	3.1	***	1.5	
Doctor	2.7		2.3	
Engineer	2.0	***	3.9	
Social Worker	3.7	***	2.6	
Electrician	1.7	***	3.7	
Draughtsman	2.4	***	3.6	
Shop Assistant	2.2	*	1.6	
Factory Worker	1.3	**	1.9	
Hairdresser	3.0	***	1.4	
Teacher	3.8	*	3.1	
Computer Operator	3.6		3.7	
	N 51		37	

\*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

\*\*  $p < 0.01$

\*  $p < 0.05$

2.

Table V. The percentage of girls and boys who regularly help with various household tasks.

KELLY A (1982) Ibid.

	% girls		% boys
Washing Up	72	***	29
Cleaning the house	46	*	21
Cleaning windows	2		5
Shopping	76		68
Taking out rubbish	33		37
Cooking	33	*	10
Washing the car	15		34
Gardening	15		34
Washing clothes	9		0
Mending clothes	9		0
Tidying room	85	**	55
Laying table	59		42
Minor repairs	4		13
Cleaning shoes	37		50
	N 54		38

\*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

\*\*  $p < 0.01$

\*  $p < 0.05$

3. Girls Getting It Together (1984) page 148.

4. Ibid page 84.

5. Ibid page 51.

6. Girls Getting It Together (1984) page 85.

7. Ibid pages 4-5.

8. Concerning the Trousers

These examples come from HNR a small co-educational comprehensive school. About two and half miles away at H&G. I conducted research concerned with this thesis where the girls were not allowed to wear trousers at all. This school was a girls' school and again overwhelmingly selected by Asian girls. In this school the girls wore thick green tights. The head teacher, herself Indian, discouraged the staff from wearing trousers and rules to do with uniform were strictly enforced.

9. "Girls Getting It Together". (1984) page 46.
10. Ibid page 48.
11. Ibid page 164.
12. Ibid page 164.
13. Ibid page 163.
14. Ibid page 162.
15. Ibid page 163.
16. Ibid page 163.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### An analysis of the relationship between schooling and female waged and domestic labour

In this chapter I would like to examine the ways in which waged and domestic labour are connected not only to capitalist production but also related to the organisation of schooling. In order to develop this analysis it is important to investigate the different places which men and women occupy within the economic structure and to recognise the extent to which women are able to participate in waged labour. By looking at the structure of work relations and the structure of school relations it is possible to analyse the relationship between women and the social relations of production. It is essential to acknowledge the fact that social class and gender relations together with racial discrimination affect patterns of paid employment.

Students from different class backgrounds are prepared through schooling to occupy different occupational positions. Students are rarely taught skills which are associated with full time employment. Families from different social classes face the realities of differing social, economic and political realities, as do women who belong to ethnic minorities who have to face the additional problem of racial discrimination and institutional racism.

### The structure of female employment

I will attempt to show how women are related to the capitalist economy through their patterns of employment and through their role in the social and biological reproduction of the work force.

Human capitalist theorists concentrate upon the relationship between schooling, investment of human capital and earnings. They ignore the contribution made by women through their domestic labour. Woodhall (1973) has argued that increased capital expenditure in women's education would have an effect upon not only their productivity but also upon higher "standards of family health and child care, a lower birthrate and possibly the fostering of family attitudes conducive to economic growth".

Woodhall, attempting to assess the rate of return on investment in education, places the full burden of child care and socialisation upon female members of the family.

Human capital theorists regard women as inconsequential and insignificant in terms of human capital. There is no analysis of the reasons why women with the same educational experience and qualifications as men earn less money. Unmarried, divorced or single women are not accounted for in the theory of human capital.

Madeleine McDonald (1981) has commented "the cause and the effect of this neglect of women's work within the economy, both as wives and workers, means that their education was seen to have little direct economic benefit. There would seem to be little incentive to offer women opportunities in higher and further education or on the job training, or indeed to allocate resources to girls' school education when they were most likely it was assumed to 'waste' their education in marriage and family life" (page 38)

When analysing the structure of employment it is important to remember that the labour market is segmented not only by vertical and horizontal boundaries but is also divided by sexual and racial divisions. It is also very important when looking at the structure of female employment to look at the ways in which women's place in the family affects her place within waged labour. It is also important to see how patriarchal relations within schooling, the social relations of family life and the structure of employment make women vulnerable when seeking employment.

Within the structure of employment we can recognise the existence of jobs categorised as "women's work". They cluster around the low end of both primary and secondary markets and some jobs are specifically destined for black women. Levels within both secondary and primary markets will be associated with certain personality

traits and attributes. At the top end of the primary market workers, mainly male, will be encouraged to initiate, think independently and act decisively whilst at the lower ends of both markets, mainly occupied by women or working class men the type of job required is subordinate, servile or mainly concerned with supporting those at the top end of the labour market. It is impossible to examine the structure of female employment without considering women's unpaid labour within the home. It has been possible for employers to deepen the exploitation of women's labour whilst there is a sexual division of labour within the home. Dominant notions of femininity continue to define women in terms of their relationship to the family, motherhood or in relation to male members of society.

The necessity of all human societies to continue relies upon the reproduction of the capacity of all its members to survive. Under capitalism this occurs firstly by the wage with which goods and services can be bought for consumption. Secondly by domestic labour which like food, clothes and leisure can be bought by the wage and replenishes the capacity to work. Thirdly, by the welfare which provides services like health and housing to aid men and women to work harder and for longer periods. We have to analyse whether or not domestic labour is another form of labour. We have to show how necessary women's unpaid labour is to capitalism. We also have to ask whether or not it is possible to transform the social relations of the family.

Seccombe (1974), Gardiner (1975), Coulson et al (1975), Delphy (1984), Himmelweit and Mohun (1977), Molyneux (1979), Holland (1980) and Wajcman (1981) have all contributed to this debate. Some have emphasised the fact that as well as investigating the structure of gender relations within waged labour it is crucial to examine the structure of economic and social relations of the household.

Seccombe argues that a proportion of the male wage is payment for domestic labour performed by the wife. There is however no guarantee that women will receive payment for domestic labour. It is a position which emphasises economic and emotional dependency. Jean Gardiner exposes Seccombe's position "the housewives are bound .... by many ideological pressures to performing services for their husbands; if within marriage they are economically dependent on their husbands's wages and outside marriage in an inferior bargaining position within the labour market; what then is the mechanism by which equal exchange between husbands and wives can be established?" (page 178)

Domestic labour is crucial to the requirements of capitalist production. Wage levels must be held and domestic labour performs a vital function in this process. Standards of living are not only determined by wage negotiation they are also dependent upon the contribution of women's unpaid labour. Men and women

find themselves with different responsibilities within different household arrangements. The experience of life within the family, as within waged labour can be very different for male and female members. Women's employment is often characterised by periods of part time employment. It is also influenced by the changing patterns of child spacing interspersed with periods of employment.

Men as employers, teachers and husbands play an important role in reproducing the subordinate position of women. Shirley Dex (1984) has highlighted an important aspect of women's employment patterns suggesting that changes in women's employment are simultaneously connected with changes in patterns of birth control, size of family and changes in the structure of household arrangements. Dex (1984) and Bhrolchain (1983) have shown that the spaces between child birth and periods of child care have changed considerably which means that women return to work between having their children.

A large proportion of employed women are involved in part time work and the percentage is growing. The growth in female part time employment has been within the service industries and the public sector. (Dex and Shaw (1984), EOC (1984)). It is also interesting to note that when women change from full time to part time employment, usually after the birth of their first child that this transition is often associated with downward

occupational mobility. Part time employment is restricted to certain skills, pays less money and has fewer benefits (Dex 1984).

Heidi Hartmann (1979) has suggested that men have developed complex control strategies which have been incorporated into capitalist forces of production to the disadvantage of women. It is also crucial to point out that domestic activity differs across classes and cultural backgrounds. Branca (1975) and Davidoff (1976) have demonstrated that many working class women are involved in paid domestic tasks in the homes of middle class women. Many Asian women are forced, through child care, to home working.

It is a mistake to imagine that historically women have been consistently placed within the sphere of the home implying that economic and domestic labour are distinctly different areas of labour. Mary Maynard (1985) has pointed out a complex inter-relationship between the various types of work women have done both in and out of the home. However, women have found it difficult to escape from both patriarchal and capitalist forms of control. Whilst women consent to an unpaid domestic role within the family they are also consenting to lower wages in the labour market. Unpaid work within the family increases female dependency and at the same time lays the foundation for the type of work which is available within waged labour.

Women experience a dual form of control both at work and within the home. They have to face the indirect control exerted by specific ideologies concerned with the family, motherhood and acceptable forms of female behaviour. Ideologies concerned with the organisation of family life make it very difficult for families to make alternative arrangements for child care.

New and David (1985) have pointed out that even if radical changes made it possible for women to gain access to paid work there has been very little discussion about transformations within domestic arrangements. Radical changes in the form of domestic relations within the household are not likely to occur in times of economic recession. Domestic labour is crucial to the requirements of capitalist production. Wage levels must be held and domestic labour performs a vital function in this process. Standards of living are not only determined by wage negotiation they are also dependent upon the contribution of women's unpaid labour.

Not only are men and women in a different relation to the means of production they are also in a different relation to one another within the household. One of the ways in which women are trapped within domestic and financial arrangements of household management is through the notion of the family wage. Despite the fact that low male wages means that a woman's wage is crucial to the family budget the notion that male wages should



support the family persists. An adult man whether married or unmarried is assumed to earn enough to support all his dependents. His wage is supposed not only to support his family in times of sickness, crisis or child rearing, it is also meant to supplement education, old age and health care. Taxation and social security policy support the notion of the nuclear family headed by a male. Social benefits are calculated in relation to this notion. Many women are the only members of the household in employment, and many families are maintained without the support of a man. Alan Travis writing in the Guardian (July 26 1988) comments that a fifth of London household are one parent families. The myth of a family wage lingers in the minds of employers perpetuating the view that women's earnings are extra rather than essential to the family budget. Pollert (1983) and Cunnison (1983) show that women workers are clearly aware of their position in the labour force, understanding the ways in which they are controlled and exploited by both their employers and male workers. However, the women still support the notion of a family wage. Anna Pollert explains this position as a way of making sense of an irreconcilable conflict. The women in her study knew that they had to continue to labour in order for the family to survive and yet they longed for this to be a temporary nature. They were faced with a double burden of labour which could only be relieved by pregnancy or sickness. Pollert suggests that "seeing wage labour as temporary,

resorting to the identity of a dependent on someone else's wage, is a way of negotiating meaning in a hostile environment. This is easily reinforced by the ideology of a male 'family wage' espoused by their trade union movement as a working class advantage" (page 104)

Sheila Cunnison (1983) too notes how women's earnings are earmarked and seen as extras even though they play a crucial part in the housing finances. "Even when the women's money appeared to be engulfed in family finance and general living standards it was still often thought of as being spent on 'extras'.

Yeandle (1984) has pointed out that some men in her survey were happy that their wives worked if it helped the family to have a higher standard of living. Most of the women had to bargain in order to go out to work and an arrangement was possible "if the extra income was seen as beneficial for the whole family, in many cases it was made clear that the husband saw his wife's earnings as bringing a direct benefit to him".

I would like now to refer to some of the writings produced by the girls which show very different responses to how they anticipate life within a partnership and waged employment. The first piece is written by a working class writer who clearly divides the time before marriage and the period as a married woman. She writes "when I'm twenty years old I'll be

probably married and living with my husband and his family if they're here. If I'm not married I'll be still working and earning money for my wedding. I would like to marry a boy who I know, but from a different country. But before I do get married I would like to do a course on nursery nursing. The place I'm looking forward to go to get married is Singapore which is in Malaysia" (page 106) (1).

The next piece of writing comes from a confident middle class girl who hopes to go to university and writes of her future career ... "I have no plans to marry although I am involved in a steady relationship with a doctor who also works for St. Matthews.

For the first time in my life I am alone, but I enjoy the freedom of my own flat. I have many friends so do not feel lonely. I simply feel free to do as I please. I want to enjoy this freedom for many more years before I settle down to have children" (page 120) (2).

These writers see their earnings in such different ways. The potential doctor will, of course, earn a more than adequate salary whilst the working class girl sees her employment as temporary and functional in terms of paying for her wedding.

The class difference, educational background and expectations of male approval make these accounts very

interesting indeed. Despite the fact that the "doctor" seems to place a great deal of personal satisfaction in independence it would be interesting to anticipate how possible it will be to maintain this emotional independence in her mid-twenties. She may well be able to survive financially much more successfully than the first writer but ideological pressure may well place her in a difficult position when she has to prioritise her career over marriage. Griffin (1985) notes in her study that heterosexuality, marriage and motherhood were seen as inevitable "facts of life" for most young women.

One of the most distinctive characteristics of the female occupational structure is the fact that women workers are heavily concentrated in relatively few occupations. In 1984 New Earnings Survey figures showed that for all women working full time 41.5% were working in clerical and related occupations and 19% in professional and related occupations and in health and welfare. Part time female labour is concentrated in catering, cleaning and hair dressing (3).

When attempting to analyse some of the reasons why women are located within such a small range of occupations we have to ask ourselves whether or not employers discriminate in recruitment and training or whether girls do not possess the necessary qualifications for entry into certain sections of the labour market.

It seems important to look at the issue of how femininity is associated with motherhood, heterosexuality and patriarchal and class dynamics. This association may affect specific option choices, type of career, or even mean that a girl will underplay academic achievement in order to attract male attention.

For some women femininity is associated with the type and nature of career or occupation. Capital very easily accommodates characteristics associated with female attributes such as dispensability, passivity, low expectations and an acceptance of lower rates of pay. Barron and Norris (1976) have shown that ideological features affect the ways in which women see themselves as waged workers "these attributes are the product of the social relationship between employers and worker, and not something which an individual possesses independently of that relationship".

Employers and teachers are also guilty of ascribing boys and girls with masculine and feminine attributes which influences the suitability of particular jobs. It is sometimes assumed that a woman's supposed central location within the home will affect their enthusiasm for productivity, their ability to perform the job and their attitude towards work. It is critical to my argument that however much we may encourage girls to opt for career orientated subjects when discussing qualifications or however enthusiastically we encourage girls to have independent economic lives, those

aspirations will all too quickly encounter the structural boundaries of economic and social forces. At each key point in the structure women will have to face male decision makers who may have very definite ideas about women's central location within the home. Women's lives are controlled by the social relations of schooling, the social relations of the family and patriarchal controls within waged labour. Madeleine McDonald (1981) puts it well "one could argue, therefore that one form of social reproduction of female secondary workers occurs through the reproduction of domestic workers".

In this section I have argued that sexually differentiated divisions within waged labour reinforce other social divisions within the population and help to structure an economically, socially and gender divided society. It is important to examine how women analyse their own waged employment in relation to their male partner's wage and employment status.

I have noted that changes in the types of jobs available for women in the service industries and the ways in which employers have offered part-time employment to women. These jobs have not been covered by employment protection or national insurance contributions. Women have not been in a strong position within the trade union movement and have not been able to create pressure on the ways in which jobs are structured or rewarded.

In the next section of this chapter i hope to examine the significance of certain educational processes which affect the occupational destinies of women students. I hope also to establish connections between educational practices, social relations of family life and waged labour.

#### Connections between schooling and waged and domestic labour

I would like to begin this section by drawing attention to the ways in which boys and girls are prepared differentially for waged and domestic labour. Rosemary Deem (1984) has highlighted some of the educational and social objectives which link schooling to unemployment. These relationships are especially significant in a time of economic recession. Deem lists a variety of educational objectives such as preparation for both paid and unpaid employment, and preparation for the unofficial labour market where no tax or national insurance is paid. It is especially significant to observe the connections between female educational experience and unpaid domestic work within the home including unpaid child care and socialisation.

Chris Griffin (1985) quotes a particularly 'telling' experience of how domestic commitments disastrously affect the transition from school to work. Sandra, a young Irish woman applied for a full time place on a hair dressing course at a local college. Whilst Sandra

is visiting relations her mother intervenes in the acceptance of the hair dressing apprenticeship because Sandra is required to look after the daughter of an older sister. (Both her mother and sister have full time employment). As Griffin (1985) point out "Sandra's experience ... is one example of the way in which domestic commitments can shape young women's entry to college and the job market. A young man in an equivalent position would simply not have been expected to sacrifice his college place or a job for child care responsibilities. If Sandra had been male, either her mother or her sister would have had to give up their job to do child care" (page 43)

It can be seen from this example that girls experience, both within schooling and within the family, an identification with a domestic role within household arrangements. Schooling and career training are deeply concerned with the reproduction of family, class and domestic relations. Boys and girls do not experience those relations in the same way. Time after time in my study the writers expressed the importance of their role within the family, often referring to their dependence upon a male wage. This suggested to me that marriage and the family are the primary goals for many girls whilst boys were prepared primarily as wage earners. One girl writes anticipating seven reasons for wanting a husband



- to keep me company
- to be loved by some-one
- to live happily
- to have a family
- to look after him
- to take me places
- to have a substantial wage (page 41)

Whilst another writes "your husband will be happy because when he comes home ~~from~~ work while you are making the dinner your husband can play with the kids" (page 89) and another writer seeking approval from her potential husband "I would like him to tell me how he would expect me to work".

In striking contrast a working class white girl, writing as her brother would perceive the family writes "I was called from my bed at 7.30 am this morning. Stumbling down the stairs I was told that breakfast was on the table. Mom had cooked me bacon, sausage and eggs and had even poured me a cup of tea. My two sisters had prepared their own breakfast ... a couple of slices of toast.

At 8.30 am I left the house to go to school. I am in my final years taking 5 CSE. At times I feel really thick when I think of my two sisters who took 8 GCE exams.

Lunch time is here already. Barry my only sits and eats his lunch with me. At 3.30 pm it is time to go home. Mom has a glass of milk and some cookies ready for me. She asks what type of day I've had ... "the same as usual" I reply. I switch the television on in time for "Dangermouse". This is ace.

My sisters arrive home at 5.00 pm. They are tired but have to go upstairs to tidy their rooms. Mine has already been tidied for me ... I don't have to bother. Tea is at six. As usual my plate is piled up high. At 8.30 pm I switch on the video games. Space invaders is my favourite. At midnight I go to bed, ready for another totally predictable day. I might even do some home work tomorrow. Who knows? Perhaps Mom will do it for me" (page 62) (4).

These accounts demonstrate clearly that it is not only social class, race, or the structure of employment that affect educational opportunity and future prospects of employment. Womanliness or the ideology of femininity associates women with the private sphere of personal life concentrating upon the significance of personal relationship and the role of woman as carer.

The account produced by the writer who imagined she was her brother is particularly important in the ways in which we can see the enormous differences in how boys and girls experience family life. These processes are reflected in the authority structures of schools and

educational establishments. Boys and girls are evaluated by teachers using sex appropriate criteria (Spender, 1982). Teachers sexually differentiate between students, some teachers control girls using special strategies. Often boys and girls are evaluated by different standards and directed towards different careers. The girls in my study often referred to the ways in which the attitudes of teachers geared them towards female orientated careers. This was particularly true for the girls who did not anticipate a period of higher education. Some of the girls deeply resented any attempt to control a future in which it was suggested that women's 'real' role in adulthood was either as a wife or mother or lived in relation to the needs of men either as employers or as partners.

An Afro-Caribbean working class writer expresses thoughts about the future ... "at work I hope to be successful and confident so that I might prove to myself and others that being married is not a life's vocation. I'd hope that if not, I would have the strength to turn around and do something more fulfilling.

By this time I expect to have a flat of my own and maybe a cat so that there would be something to come home to" (page 67) (5).

This writer is obviously resisting a role within the family which associates her with domesticity and

dependency. She is trying to reject both male and class hegemonic relations in not accepting a natural hierarchy of male over female or dependence upon a male wage. The consent to both a low wage or part-time work together with an acceptance of male superiority is never easily achieved. Specific forms of masculinity and femininity are attempted through a series of negotiations. Whilst we are able to observe the primacy of marriage and motherhood as a destination for girls we must always acknowledge that contesting factions do not easily accept the conditions of their own subordination.

If girls are persuaded that femininity is characterised by reticence, acquiescence and submissiveness it may be a sign of their acceptance of both male and class hegemony. This will affect all aspects of the structure and organisation of their social lives. It is perhaps the 'hidden agenda' which characterises some of our educational processes, which by concealing the nature of class and gender antagonisms maintain both class and male hegemony. If it appears 'natural' that masculinity is primarily associated with the world of work as Stuart Hall (1978) suggests "for men above all, the work-a-day world of work and the formal and informal values associated with it seem in many ways determinants with the definition of "reality" itself ... for women the 'natural' situation may be the anti-thesis" (page 141).

Women may be persuaded that the 'reality' of their lives is associated with the private world of the home. A comment by Davies (1981) helps to clarify the position. "Hegemony is a concept which directs us to thinking through how ideologies are produced as subjectivities and lived experience that appears to be natural and unchangeable. Hegemony is sustained precisely because such cultural and social practices appear to be so 'natural' and unquestionable to those experiencing them" (page 57).

#### The structure of control

One of the aspects of socialisation experienced both within the family and within schooling, is the experience of being controlled. At times these authority structures resemble those found within the work place. Girls and boys experience these processes quite differently and may respond in a variety of ways. Not all girls accept an education which stresses personal characteristics such as servility, subservience and acquiescence, nor are all boys assertive, competitive and ruthless.

Althusser (1971) points out that diversity and appropriate skills for an advanced capitalist formation are transferred from the place of production to the capitalist education system. This process has never been well performed. It has never been easy to reproduce a submissive workforce as Johnson (1976,

1976b), Jones (1976) and CCCS (1981) have shown. There is a constant struggle within the educational system to encourage acceptance of the existing order.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) have insisted that schools cannot function independently of production. They have attempted to show that the relationship experienced by students in relation to teachers was also mirrored in the hierarchical divisions of labour in production. These relationships are characterised by differing degrees of authority. Schools are organised around continual assessment, evaluation and allocation of rewards. This increases competitiveness and these characteristics are also found within the fragmentation and competitiveness of waged work.

The school undoubtedly prepares students for adult life in a variety of ways but how close the correspondence between the social relations of economic life are replicated within the social relations of school life is open to debate.

The work of Wolpe (1974, 1977, 1978), Deem (1978, 1980, 1981, 1982a, 1982b), Arnot (formerly McDonald) (1980, 1981, 1979/80, 1982) has focussed upon the ways in which ideological formations, which work both inside and outside educational institutions, have influenced the processes of schooling and the responses made by boys and girls to those specific processes. This perspective

has attempted to locate the origins of female inequality within class and patriarchal relations which operate both internally and externally to school processes. Feminists have addressed this debate asking questions about the school's function in reproducing a sexually, racially and class segmented labour force. They have not only been concerned with the differences of female/male wages and conditions, but have also raised questions about the impact of the patriarchal family upon women's capacity for equity with men within production. Delamont (1980), Griffin (1985), Fuller (1978), Spender (1982), Spender + Sarah (1980) have examined the contradictory messages given to girls both within the formal and informal curriculum.

The girls in my study frequently referred to specific instances where they were disciplined about sexually appropriate clothing and make up. I am also concerned with the ways in which girls become alienated from the content of some subjects. It is difficult for some girls to associate themselves with certain 'masculine' perceived subjects. There is a conflict between being seen as a successful female student (which will be rewarded with a system of grades) and being approved of as a sexually attractive woman. For the girls in my study it seemed as if their job or career would be associated with more "feminine appropriate" characteristics. This occurred across class groupings. The working class students saw themselves as nursery nurses, shop assistants, hair

dressers and home workers. The middle class girls when facing a decision in their medical careers chose rather to work in gynaecology or geriatrics than a high status area of medicine. (Girls Getting It Together (1984) pages 29, 30, 31, 96, 110, 111, 113, 119) (6).

The ways in which girls come to make particular subject choices often restricts their access to certain types of employment. Byrne (1975) have shown that structural organisation of educational facilities show that girls experience compounded inequality of provision which leads them to an "education for terminal occupation as wife and mother".

The relationship between curriculum organisation  
and female waged labour

Shaw (1976), Bryne (1978), Deem (1978), Scott (1980) and McDonald (1981) have all drawn attention to the fact that patterns of curriculum differentiation initially affect occupational choice, vocational opportunity and the availability of places on specific courses within higher educational establishments. Subject choice will have an effect upon the availability of certain jobs or careers. Class and gender based definitions of certain subjects may affect choices. McDonald (1981) has argued "despite the actual availability of all subjects girls and boys of different classes learn the new ideology of sex differences of intelligence, ability,



interests and ambitions, making it appear natural that boys and girls should study different school subjects".

The subjects studied and examinations passed at secondary school have a considerable influence on girls' and boys' future career opportunities. If we look at the distribution of school leavers by sex and qualifications obtained on leaving school in England 1984-85 we can see that female school leavers were more successful in achieving grade 1 CSE and 'O' level passes than boys (7). It is also interesting to notice subject specialism. Statistics issued by DES (1985) (8) show girls preference for and success in English, History and Languages. The only science subject in which girls achieve the majority of passes is Biology.

What is significant for my analysis is the fact that girls are achieving as successfully as boys at examination level but the proportions of representation in arts and languages are significantly higher for girls than for boys.

As we analyse these patterns of subject choice we discover that choices of subject are crucial factors in terms of entry into particular jobs. We begin to see some of the implications of the importance of curricular choice and the limitations imposed upon girls who are directed towards subjects which do not lead towards high status well paid careers.

Although I have concentrated upon students who are successful in examinations and attempted to show that female curricular choice has implications for career or job opportunities, many of the writers did not anticipate taking any kind of examination. Schooling may well have contributed to accounts which showed that the writers had low self esteem, often displayed examples of deviant behaviour and were engaged in various strategies of resistance as excerpts from the following account show.

"I get free dinners (being in care). The only time that its not worth going to school is in the summer before the six weeks' holiday. They we go down the park and sunbathe or go paddling in the river ... I don't wag school in the winter. I walk the streets while its raining and by afternoon I'm starving. The teachers are wicked. When a teacher hits, you automatically hit back or I would and have done. A teacher is a thoughtless object and not a person with feeling in teaching hours ... all in all for the last six years you learn to make a profit and survive instead of learning English Literature or French" (page 50) (9).

Despite the fact that many boys and girls will leave school without qualifications and no further prospect of employment boys will be expected to anticipate waged employment whilst girls may spend a lot of time making themselves personally attractive to men, some girls rely

much more heavily upon their personal attractiveness than pursuing a career or training. (Lees 1986), Griffin 1985).

Many girls do not perceive employment as a long term state of affairs, despite the fact that married or unmarried they will spend a greater part of their life in some form of paid employment. As will be seen from the next chapter many of the girls in my study did not see themselves as 'career girls' but tended to concentrate upon their role as wife and mother. Some of the girls dreamt of glamorous jobs associated with a rather exaggerated form of femininity such as models, pop stars or hair dressers ... and most of them, rather unrealistically, wanted also to have children. The following account expresses the situation as the girls write about their futures - "when I'm twenty I will be in a different country, not married and working in an hairdressing salon with lots of nice people. I hope to travel the world with Barbara. I want to be a singer with Barbara as well. I may be in a job or I have a relationship going, or I may be married and have children. At the age of twenty I'll have left school and got a job at hairdressing. Hopefully I'll have moved away from her" (page 106) (10).

In an attempt to make sense of some of the contradictory forces in which girls are placed they became alienated from the content of some subjects. School work is rewarded by a system of grades and privileges and at

times there is a conflict between being seen as a competent successful female student and being approved of as a sexually attractive woman. If as Bernstein (1971) has suggested, the curriculum has come to be seen "as a major regulator of the structure of experience" it is crucial that we begin to look at curricular practices and curricular choice to investigate the possibility of whether or not these aspects of schooling contribute towards unequal access to employment possibilities.

#### The position of black female waged labour

If there is a specific relationship between gender, class and the structure of employment within a capitalist means of production black women are particularly vulnerable. Garnsey (1985) et al have shown that the structure of employment changes in relation to economic fluctuations, internal changes within particular industries and the demands made by trade unions concerning pay and conditions of employment. Black people came to Great Britain in the nineteen fifties and sixties in response to economic demands generated by a relatively short lived period of economic growth. The Runnymede Trust Radical Statistics Race Group (1980) states their employment situation remains very much the same with black people situated in specific types of employment concentrated in certain large cities. Black women are particularly vulnerable, as together with black men, they are

subjected to racial discrimination in employment, housing and education. (Lonsdale (1985), Runnymede Trust and Radical Statistics Race Group (1980), Craig et al (1979), PSI (1984)).

Rates of economic activity for Afro-Caribbean women are higher than those of white female workers. It is also significant to note that the average earnings of black female manual workers are greater than those of white female manual workers. This is also true for black female non manual workers (Runnymede Trust Radical Statistics Race Group 1980). This may be due to the fact that black women are far more likely to work full time than white women. (Lomas and Monck 1977). It is also important to include in this analysis the fact that black people at all levels of employment earn less than white people (Smith (1974), Runnymede Trust (1980), Lonsdale (1985)).

There are distinct patterns of employment for Afro-Caribbean and Asian female workers. Immigration Law, changes in entry requirements, poor housing and discriminatory treatment in the hands of health and welfare agencies have all contributed to the black and Asian experience of institutionalised racism. Although Asian and black women share the experience of white female labour in similar ways, they also share quite different cultural and historical circumstances.

Girls from ethnic minorities most certainly experience schooling and especially entry into a training programme or occupation differently from their female white students. We have also shown that the structure of the female labour market ensures that black and Asian female labour are subjected to the lowest paid and most vulnerable areas of employment.

Black and Asian girls will also have to face the specific pressure of racist assumptions and stereotypical images which inform the attitudes of teachers and potential employers.

In this chapter I have argued that despite assumptions concerned with equality of opportunity for boys and girls they are educated towards different places within waged and domestic labour.

We have seen that the labour within the home and the labour connected with capitalist production are separated. This has resulted in women being associated with domestic responsibility whilst waged male labour is defined as 'real' work. I have attempted to bring the domestic labour debate into the central arena for discussion and hoped to show the relationship between girls' education and employment is significantly different to boys education and employment. Women are often situated in jobs which are an extension of their domestic labour. Asian women are particularly vulnerable in the clothing industry where their skills

in clothing manufacture are accommodated by male employers who are able to increase profitability by keeping wages low and controlling any form of resistance. Asian women in this situation suffer in a specific way as the patriarchal features of family life are also reproduced within their place of employment.

It can be argued that school students experience the social relations of schooling in preparation for the authority structures of employment. The structure of waged labour utilises patriarchal power relations where we are able to observe a hierarchy of male managers over women and less assertive males. In schools it is possible to see a hierarchy of male head teachers, administrators and inspectors controlling a large number of female teachers. Schooling associates girls with preparation for family life and accompanying gender relations. It is not surprising that given the present organisation of the family, the presence of male hegemonic forces and the context of a capitalist society that schools reinforce the primacy of waged labour as a destination for boys and the primacy of marriage and motherhood as a destination for girls. Walker and Barton (1983) have argued "if one reduces the sexual division of labour in the family to a particular manifestation of the social relations which arise from the organisation of the forces of production then interventions which are aimed solely at changing attitudes to familial roles can only achieve limited

reforms". I would argue that it is not only the relationship of female labour and specific economic factors which deny women access to the same wages as men. Women's lives are controlled by the social relations of the family, the social relations of schooling and patriarchal control within waged labour.



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Table 2:1 Females as a percentage of CSE (Grade 1) and GCE 'O' and 'A' level passes, selected subjects (Summer exams) England and Wales 1985.
8. DES and Welsh Joint Education Committee  
Figure 2:1 Females as a percentage of entrants in selected subjects for CSE, GCE 'O' and 'A' level summer examinations England and Wales 1985.
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## CHAPTER SIX

### The relationship between processes of schooling and female waged and domestic labour: Girls' perceptions of themselves as workers

We have seen in the previous chapter the various ways in which schooling lies between the world of the family and the world of waged employment. It has been suggested that boys and girls from different classes and different ethnic groups are prepared simultaneously but differently for parenthood and a place within the production process.

In this Chapter I would like to demonstrate, using the material produced in the writers' groups, how the girls perceive themselves as partners, workers, mothers and wives. The emphasis in this section will be on the ways in which the writers anticipate waged employment.

Educational processes play an important role in the reproduction of the social relations of production. Together with other aspects of the social formation schooling maintains and recreates some of the crucial conditions necessary for the continuation of a sexually divided labour force and the reproduction of structures of patriarchal power. But as Apple (1982) has stated "education has to be viewed as part of a larger economic and ideological configuration. The real issue is not what education alone does, but how it is related to class, race, and gender and the control, production, and

distribution of economic and cultural power"

The relationship of female school experience to subsequent labour market experience is not the same as the relation that exists for males. Not only is it important to analyse the relationship of women to existing job structures, and the structure and ideology of schooling, but it is crucial to look at the structure and ideology of family life. We should also include in our analysis the effects of male structures of power in the family, educational establishment and work processes.

By looking at the structure of relations and the ideology of the family together with structural and ideological relations of the school and place of employment, I hope to analyse the ways in which class, gender, and ethnicity affect the structure of job opportunities. Hopefully this will deepen our understanding of the political economy of education debate. This argument must also include an analysis of the different ways in which boys and girls encounter the authority structures of schooling especially differences which emphasise masculine and feminine aspects of socialisation. The social relations of schooling and appropriate behaviour necessary for the various processes of production will at times coincide. Employers may be seeking such personal characteristics

as punctuality, submissiveness or specific characteristics associated with class or cultural patterns and these characteristics will apply to both male and female. At other times employers will depend upon a sexual division of labour in order to obtain the cheapest and most available supply of labour, and this may be provided by part time female labour or women from ethnic minority groups who may, as in the case of home workers actually cut the cost of production by using their own homes as places of employment. Women are increasingly being forced into accepting the lowest paid jobs at a time of recession. As Coyle (1984) writes, commenting upon the fact that women's income is essential to the household "the income which a woman contributes to the family household often means the difference between poverty and a reasonable standard of living"

It is interesting at this point to look at the ways in which schooling has contributed to a process where by women will accept such a subordinate position within the production process. In some way both class and male hegemony have combined to shape the education system and its relation both to the structure of the family and the needs of production. The written material produced within the writing groups will show how the girls attempted to make sense of the social class divisions, gender antagonisms and different ethnic groupings, which informed their view of the social world.

Women are often put in a contradictory situation when considering the importance of waged labour. Wajcman (1981) when referring to the work experiences of women has indicated that domestic and familial commitments often come into conflict with the necessity of another contributory wage in the organisation of the household budget. Yeandle (1984), Westwood (1984) and Pollert (1981) have all argued that many households depend upon the contribution of a female wage. We must always take into account when discussing the relationship between schooling and economic activity that if girls are prepared for a role within the family this will also affect the amount of time and the type of participation she can undertake within waged work.

The role of domestic labour within the family crucially affects the ways in which girls are prepared for adult life. Domestic labour especially benefits and maintains capitalist production in a time where there is a reduction in labour requirements. At times of economic expansion women are drawn into waged labour and may not become quite so economically dependent upon a male wage. I would not agree entirely with Madeleine Arnot (1981) that patriarchal ideologies unite women's educational experience across class boundaries but I have found within my data that "patterns of class differentiation in education give bourgeois women far more freedom and opportunities than their working class sisters" (page 81). In my study there was however an acceptance of the importance of bourgeois expectations and values on the

part of the working class girls. Working class girls are faced with the immediate reality which indicates that their earnings are crucial to the household budget. Middle class girls face different social relations as they find themselves competing with boys of their own social class for educational opportunities.

This Chapter explores through the written material of the writers' groups how the existence of a hidden curriculum has geared certain students, especially female students to accept curricular options which will not enable them to compete aggressively for the higher status better paid occupations. Personality traits such as docility, passivity, acquiescence and deference are associated with resignation, inferiority and poor self image. Boys and girls who accept those definitions may be destined for a low status position within the job structure. Class and gender socialisation cannot be conceptualised as totally separate processes but it is helpful at this point to hypothesise how students are encouraged to accept patterns of curricular choice which are associated not only with the world of paid employment but are also connected with highly specific roles within the family.

My final argument in this Chapter will be concerned with the fact that economic forces do not totally prefigure, nor do they directly correspond with, the educational processes which inform class and gender consciousness.

Students are also concerned with manipulating the system to their own ends. As Apple (1982) writes "this assumption ... (referring to passivity) tends to overlook the fact that students ... are creatively acting in ways that often contradict expected norms and dispositions ... at the same time as they are controlled, they also continuously attempt, often through cultural, not political ways to articulate challenges to that control"

I hope, by referring to the data, to show how the girls opposed certain gender, ethnic and class definitions, showing that girls do not readily conform to the needs of capitalist forces nor to the patriarchal and racially constructed demands of both employers and family members.

But let us now turn to the ways in which the structure of social relations within schooling are associated with the structural relations of the family and the structure of social relations within employment.

#### The Structure of Social Relation within Schooling, the Family and Employment. A Continuity of Relations?

When looking at the economic structure of a capitalist, or for that matter a socialist society, it is crucial to look at the ways in which the social and cultural relations are related to the means of production. It

is important to try and establish what sorts of specific cultural patterns and social and economic structures are being produced and for whose benefit. One of the objectives of this particular piece of research is to try and see how subordinate groups, such as women are placed within an unequal set of relationships within the family and within employment and try to isolate some of the cultural and class responses to those sets of conditions. It is important to analyse the extent to which the girls in my study were aware of their own contribution to the processes of social reproduction. I hope by citing some of the girls' perceptions of their adult role as workers, mothers, and partners to show that they are part of a dynamic cultural process which includes distinctive language patterns, similar responses to the types of child care that may be possible, and a variety of responses concerned with the nature of their intimate social relations. the most important variable besides gender is seen to be through their class membership. It is interesting to note that Apple (1982) suggests that the correspondence between patterns of cultural experience and the economy are not always as tightly drawn as some may argue. "Class is something that is both a structural position (where you stand in the unequal processes of power, control and reproduction) and something lived ..... and the ideologies that are lived out are not merely reflections of what is functional for reproduction"



I would like to illustrate the differences in the ways girls from different classes dealt with the contradiction of being primarily associated with the domestic sphere whilst at the same time being directed towards waged labour. This analysis will help us to see how girls have to take into account a set of social relations within the family in which male members attempt to control, manipulate or coerce female members of the family to accept certain conditions. By accepting patriarchal control within the family and possibly within the hierarchy at the place of work it is obvious that girls have been prepared through a variety of agencies to consent to both class and patriarchal hegemonic forces.

In the following piece of writing the girl is describing a situation in which she has been offered a job in Edinburgh. The writer has to make a series of choices which involve her own economic future and reveal her emotional dependency upon her male partner.

"If it had been any other situation my independence would have overruled everything and I wouldn't have hesitated in accepting the job; but I had to think about what my decision would mean. I had been living with my partner for a couple of months and enjoyed the life with that person. I just wanted and found satisfaction mentally and physically.

However I had under-estimated the opinions of my partner. Although we were living together on equal terms, he always wanted to be known as the breadwinner and that he had a dominant part in the relationship.

I explained to him the situation, and although his ego was hurt, he accepted the fact that there were no ties. I wanted to stick up for myself but I thought I had hurt him by wanting my own way, so in the end I never accepted the position" (page 135) (1).

The writer of this piece anticipated a position in the labour force which would have given her a measure of financial independence. She attended a selective school and was taking 'A' level examinations. We have noted in the previous Chapter that in 1983 that girls who were entered for 'A' level examinations were far more likely to take subjects such as English, French, Sociology, Biology and Domestic subjects. It is quite likely that the writer would not be competing for the same type of job as her male partner. The structure of the job market would mean that even if both applicants male and female applied for similar jobs the man would be able to occupy a position at a higher level within the primary sector. The woman would occupy a subordinate position within the primary sector. Some jobs are restricted to men and others jobs are seen as "women's work". I would however argue that despite the fact that many girls successfully gain academic qualifications, their education has also transmitted a particular

attitude towards their role within the family. A situation which does not prevail for male members of the family. Some students are encouraged through schooling to see themselves as adults who will provide services for other members of society. Girls are often encouraged to take into account their relationship with men when they make decisions about their future. They are assisted in this process by both the family and educational institutions. The man who is described in this account sees himself as the 'breadwinner' and is seen to be in a position of financial superiority. By conceding to his request to deny herself an independent future the female writer has to face the fact that she has withdrawn from a specific place within production. Carol Smart (1984) shows how women maintain an indirect relationship to production and may consequently deny themselves access to an independent form of financial rewards. "A woman's indirect relationship to the means of production does not only affect her class position and weakens her ability to negotiate for a wage on the same terms as men, it also makes her extremely vulnerable to the man she is married to or living with as he is, for the vast majority of women, her only access to a relatively decent wage"

When women come to identify with a primary location within the home their domestic labour is appropriated by capitalist production. They are also committing themselves to a particular social and economic dependency upon the male wage.

The writer of the previous piece could expect to be in a reasonable position to compete within the labour market, and despite the restrictions of specific curricular options and on acceptance of specific ideological definitions of the relationship that sees her partner as a male breadwinner, the writer does acknowledge the importance of financial independence. The writer in the next account is beset with anxiety about both her intimate relationships and her capacity to assert herself at her place of employment. The use of words such as "maybe", "hopefully" and phrases such as "I might be able to cope" and "I am mostly frightened" are spread through the text and the tenor of the passage indicates that the writer feels ambiguous about her role as a partner and also indicates that not only will it be difficult to get employment but she may not be able to look after her own interests.

"In ten years time I could be married or living with my boyfriend and maybe have a child. Hopefully I can get a job. My main weakness is coping with the situation when I reach a certain age .. how am I going to manage myself and other people.

I am mostly frightened because my husband/boyfriend might expect me to do everything and I might not be able to cope and we might have a big argument and split up. Meaning my husband/boyfriend might depend on me to do everything because I am a woman and women are expected

to do everything in the house from washing up to tying shoe laces. Even though I am going to be a woman in ten years time I want to be loved and not to be loved for what I am or what I do to make my relationship successful. Also what I want to make sure is that I am good at it when it comes to making a decision. I want that particular job and I am happy at it and I can cope and not be frightened to speak out" (page 70) (2).

Theorists of direct reproduction (Bowles and Gintis (1976), Althusser (1972), Bourdieu (1973) have argued that the shaping of consciousness through socialisation develops beliefs, values, self concepts that are essential for the social relations of production ..... Bowles and Gintis (1976) argue "the reproduction of the social relations of production depends on the reproduction of consciousness" (page 127).

In order for production to proceed it seems that particular forms of consciousness are necessary, but not sufficient, for the process to be maintained. The school and the family assist in the construction of a variety of forms of consciousness. Girls encounter a different set of relationships to those experienced by boys. Connell (1982) refers to the school's role in reproducing masculinity and femininity through "masculinizing and feminising practices". Some aspects of schooling establish sets of relations between male and female students which are connected by social class. The writer in the preceeding account has come to

accept, although she does resent the fact, that her role within the family will include a large share of domestic work. However her main source of anxiety seems to be related to her ability to match her partner's expectations of her role as a wife and her ability to maintain a job. I would argue that the writer will not only be controlled by a set of social relations within her family, by accepting that her self-concept is associated with male approval, but it is also probable that she will also have little control over her employment conditions. The sexual and class division of labour is one of the central means by which employers control and manipulate workers, but in the example quoted above there is another process by which working class men are also capable of utilising not only the material domestic labour of their partners, but also exploit the female's need to gain a sense of feminine identity through male approval.

Bowles and Gintis (1976) have argued that schooling transmits a set of authority structures which mirror those experienced within employment..." in each case the new generation will acquire the behavioural norms for appropriate levels of the capitalist production process - the types of personal demeanor, modes of self presentation, self image and social class identifications which are crucial ingredients of job adequacy" (page 131).

When analysing my data I discovered that time and time again when writing about their future employment prospects the girls would refer to the ways in which their parents or families would perceive them as workers. Phrases like "my parents felt that I had made the wrong decision and I began to regret my actions" (page 114) and "whether that's the right thing to do or not I don't know but my parents would have had a fit if I'd decided otherwise" (page 111) and "fear of drifting apart from my mother and father" (page 65) (3). It would seem that the writers of these accounts are very conscious of their parents approval when it came to anticipating a future career. Barrett and McIntosh have (1982) indicated that the "principal significance of the family lies in the construction of gender identity and gender subjectivity". By referring much more consciously to the attitudes of their parents about future employment than anticipating the authority structures that will affect them when they encounter the social relations of production, the writers are emphasising the central work of the family .. the production of femininity and masculinity. Boys are assumed to find a 'rightful' place within production but girls have to consider not only careers from a reduced area of choice but the ways in which their future employment will affect their anticipated relationships with men.

Class, the social relations of family life and the  
structure of female employment

When examining the structure of job opportunities for women we have seen that some women can be easily dispensed with, they are often exploited by low pay and poor conditions. Their unpaid work within the home has also laid down the conditions for the sort of work they may take up within the economy. We must also, in order to understand the relationship between the organisation of family life and the structure of female employment, examine the social relations of both spheres. We must look especially carefully at the different forms of patriarchal authority as they may affect women from different classes in different ways.

If we look at the account written by the middle class girls who attended the selective school we can see that their expectations of success are high. In two different accounts the girls perceive themselves in situations where promotion will be a possibility "I'm working my way up in the geriatric hospital I've been assigned to. There are two people above me in line for a senior doctor's post, but it leaves me with a chance of promotion" (page 113). And in the second account the writer actually seeks out a qualification in geriatric medicine in order to "look at alternative positions with more opportunities for advancement... I wanted to be as well equipped as I could be for my job. Also the fact of under staffing in the branch would mean



opportunities for promotion to a more demanding job" (page 119).

It is significant that unlike the other writers both girls delayed the prospect of marriage at this point in their careers. The first writer comments "marriage was never really a strong option for me, I can't commit myself to one person for the rest of my life, a solitary life seems much more appealing" (page 113). The second writer also primarily concentrates upon her career and writes "I decided quickly not to get married, at least at this stage in my career. There was no hurry or necessity to marry, I preferred to get myself settled in my job and my flat and concentrate on my own life" (page 119) (4). The girls from the sixth form, who anticipated a career rather than a job, realised that in order to gain more control in decision making and gain financial rewards, they needed to compete for a specific place within the hierarchically organised structure of the labour market. Within their schooling competition is a daily experience and the girls have assimilated certain structural relationships concerned with their place within the capitalist formation.

Two interesting factors emerge, as women they both see themselves in geriatric medicine which is a sector within the health service which has a low image. By taking this route they increase their chances for promotion. Secondly they were in the minority (within

the writing groups) when they indicated that marriage would either be delayed or denied. If these expectations were to be realised it is highly probable that they will be amongst the small number of unmarried professional women who do attain high status employment. The hierarchy within the medical profession is segregated with a higher percentage of men in the high status positions. The women who successfully attain status within the medical profession will have overcome to a considerable extent male prejudice. Female married doctors will also have to consider the amount of domestic labour that is possible if they are to compete with unmarried women colleagues and other male doctors.

There is a strikingly different account compiled by a working class girl as she writes about the detail of life as a secretary. The writer clearly perceives the job as concerned with servicing the needs of the manager and has accepted the fact that the tasks involved in running an office are sexually divided.

"9.15 am Each work, go to the boss's room and collect the day's work, give messages, make phone calls. Start working.

11.00 am Carry on doing the work given, answer phone calls, make arrangements with important people to see the boss.

- 12 noon      Dinner time, go to the canteen with friends,  
eat dinner, talk, sometimes go for a walk.  
Do outside jobs for the boss.
- 3.00 pm      Go to the bank for the boss, post all the  
mail, get some orders for him, go back to  
work and carry on with the work. Have a cup  
of tea and make some for the boss.
- 4.00 pm      Try and complete all the work that was given,  
tidy my office desk, then tidy the boss's  
desk and ask permission to leave" (page 33)
- (6).

Whilst it is possible to argue that certain sections of unskilled working class men are also socialised into similar subservient roles within the production process, it is also crucial to observe and analyse the effects of male dominance in the hierarchies of labour processes. Hartmann (1976) argues that "while there is a need for the hierarchisation and segmentation of the work force on the part of capital, it is important to recognise that it is not just capital, but men, both as employers and workers who have played a critical role in maintaining women in their subordinate status"

One of the ways by which women are controlled and humiliated within the work process is through sexual comments and harassment. Two of the girls, one working

class and one middle class, refer to the possibility of this type of patriarchal power.

One writes " I had to work quite hard on the gynaecology course suffering endless jokes about womens' bodies which I tried not to take to heart, although several times I considered applying to the EOC about sexual harassment" (page 110).

And the other writer, who also refers to the fact that as a woman she will have to be prepared to tolerate a certain amount of sexual abuse, writes "in ten years time the thing that will stop me going to the top of my chosen profession will be lack of self confidence. I probably will take a lot from my employer e.g. late nights, dirty jokes, but not sexual harassment" (page 66) (6).

These examples assist us to begin to understand that not only are women controlled by class, the member of the sixth form anticipating a career as a doctor and the Afro-Caribbean writer probably sees herself in the manufacturing industry or the health service, but across class boundaries both women anticipate sexual harassment. Structures of patriarchal power, control and regulation are associated too with biological attributes. Catherine Mackinnon has associated specific feminine characteristics related to certain types of employment with sexual harassment "the very

qualities which men find attractive to women they harass are the real qualifications for the jobs for which they hire them". These conditions merely apply vis a vis men and men, between classes or across class boundaries.

It is highly probable that most of the girls in my study will encounter a variety of forms of authority relations if they successfully gain employment and the most powerful of those forms of control will be through a sexually and class segmented work organisation.

Clarricoates (1980) has expressed the view that "it is patriarchy - the male hierarchical ordering of society, preserved through marriage and family via the sexual division of labour that is the core of women's oppression".

It is therefore essential that we investigate the ways in which pedagogical practices and management strategies become part of the organisational principles which place students in particular social relationships. These practices and principles which characterise both the family and the school have to be formed in a particular way which causes the students to accept, modify or reject them. These sets of social relationships may correspond to the hierarchical division of labour in production. Socialisation processes within the family are not without significance.

Barratt and McIntosh (1982) have illustrated that the construction of femininity and masculinity are the central work of the family but specific sets of practices identify differences between bourgeois family form and the form of working class family life.

When we attempt to look at the gender defined practices within educational processes we must remember that we are looking at the ways in which schooling is restructuring or reinforcing gender relations that exist within the family. When we begin to look at gender differentiation we are trying to explain how social relations are organised in the interests of one class or sex to the disadvantage of the other sex or other social classes.

In this section I have attempted to demonstrate how the structure of relations and ideologies of family life are related to the structure of social relations at the place of employment. It can be argued that the organisation of the family influences the occupational choice of many of the writers. Some were prepared to compete and attempt to climb the hierarchical divisions of labour whilst other girls accepted the possibility of routine office or health service employment.

The organisation of school knowledge and the  
organisation of control strategies in relation to the  
reproduction of class and gender relations

In school students are categorised by age, sex, and social class. Bernstein (1977), Bourdieu (1971), MacDonald (1981) and Connell (1982) have contributed to discussions concerned with what can be considered legitimate and illegitimate areas of knowledge. The structure of knowledge, the form of teaching, the categorisation of school knowledge as opposed to family and community experience contribute to the making of certain 'outsider' groups whose cultural patterns, commonsense understandings, and alternative familial organisation do not correspond to vital features of the bourgeois curriculum. Bourdieu (1971) when writing about the "thinkable and the unthinkable" elements of organised knowledge writes "it produces a representation of the social world immediately adjusted to the structure of socio-economic relationships which are consequently perceived as natural, so contributing to the symbolic buttressing of the existing balance of forces."

Turning now to the examination of educational processes I would like to look at the ways in which some of these processes transmit specific definitions of masculinity and femininity which support the class structure, especially the structure of female employment. In the family too the child learns class based definitions of

masculinity and femininity often experiencing quite distinct divisions of labour. The experience of schooling may show students the boundaries between what is considered male and female behaviour and experience. MacDonald (1980) explains "the boundaries between the appropriate activities, interests and expectations of future work for the two sexes are maintained and the relations and hierarchies between the two are determined by such a gender code" (page 22).

We can see how these boundaries are re-inforced by the choices made by a group of Asian and Afro-Caribbean working class girls. When writing about their anticipated future occupations they imagined they would be employed in positions of servility. They could of course be influenced by the fact that these are the type of jobs available to their mothers, aunts and sisters. When writing about her potential life as a secretary one girl describes the routine inside the office, "doing typing ... take notes, type letters ..... tidy up files" (page 29). In two other accounts girls who have chosen nursing suggest that their duties will include "go see patients and make sure they are comfortable, clean dirty sheets, wash patients clothes" (page 31) whilst another refers to "getting the patients ready to go to dinner ... giving patients a cake, toast etc ... and talking to patients" (page 96) (7). Other girls in this groups saw their future careers within hairdressing, shop work and nursery nursing. Again these jobs include aspects of servility, compliance to



the customers' needs in the case of shop work and hairdressing, and characteristics usually associated with submissiveness. Nursing, service industries, nursery nursing and clerical work require not only different qualifications to those required for university entrance, they also require quite specific social relations. It is very unlikely that large numbers of boys will opt for these occupations.

In the New Earnings Survey 1984 it can be seen that women are heavily concentrated in the service industries. The highest percentage being employed within the clerical and clerical related employment.

Despite the emphasis upon providing both male and female students with equality of access to educational opportunity and a decrease in the differences of provisions made for boys and girls within the organisation of schools we are faced with a situation in which sex differences are transmitted within the process of schooling. Definitions of appropriate masculine and feminine behaviour may be disseminated as much through hierarchical and patriarchal authority structures, as through specific issues such as curriculum reform.

It is also important to realise that schooling helps to reproduce class divisions and that social divisions are also reproduced within the family. Carter (1976) writes "to understand the relationship of women to existing

jobs structures we must also consider not only the structure and ideology of schooling but also the structure and ideology of the family" (page 80).

One of the most important contributions to the analysis of the relationship between schooling and employment has been given by Bowles and Gintis (1976) in their suggestion that students feel alienated from the content of their curriculum. Within schools students are rewarded by marks, examination success and an array of approval for appropriate social behaviour. Students are continually assessed, selected and evaluated through competitiveness and commendation for compliance to the authority structures within the schools. The dominance of the academic curriculum as the definition of what is really worthwhile knowledge excludes huge areas of both working class experience and the experience of members of ethnic minorities. Grafton (1983) et al have indicated that girls from the low to middle range ability have been directed towards child care, child development, cookery and courses on parenthood. In a survey of secondary educational curricular options, Cox (1976) found that 51 per cent of the schools had developed in the preceeding five years courses concerned with the organisation of family life and parenting. During the 1970s Keith Joseph concentrated upon the 'cycle of deprivation'. This notion linked material deprivation with unsuccessful socialisation into adult life and transferred attention from poor housing and low wages to the site of the family. Schooling was seen as

a major area where break through into the cycle of deprivation could occur through educating students into idealised forms of family responsibility. As Scott (1980) has shown, by providing child care and parenting courses in the curriculum the school plays a key part in "relegating girls and women to a unique place in the family and a specific place in the work force".

In my study there are considerable class differences between the responses of the girls at the selective grammar school and those who attended other secondary schools.

Formal qualifications are an absolute pre-requisite for entry into professions such as law, education, medicine, engineering or higher education. Competition is crucial for the operation of bureaucracies, international monopolies and large cartels. The practices of schooling impregnate certain subjects as conventionally typified as male and are organised and perceived as subjects which rely upon the supposed male characteristics of rationality and competitiveness. Competition, assertiveness, identification with these so called high status subjects are associated with masculinity and many girls avoid such a relationship and concentrate upon subjects which are associated with collaboration, discussion or expressive aspects such as English Literature, Modern Languages, Art and Commercial subjects.

When we analyse the writing produced at the girls' grammar school we find a high degree of correspondence between the attitudes of the family and those of the teachers. There is an emphasis upon academic and social success, and girls who accept the social relations of the school, despite its many contradictions for girls, will have a far higher chance of obtaining employment than the working class girls who attend the youth club. Whilst girls are required to conform to competitive practices in order to achieve entry into the occupations of their choice, they may also experience parental pressure. The influence from home and school may exert similar constraints. This is particularly shown in the accounts produced by the sixth form students.

One girl writes "I was expected to get all 'A' grades. I had done well in previous exams but people always feel that whatever public exams they take are going to be really important and will affect their lives etc. etc. My parents tried to be helpful by saying "You do well anyway" ....my mother thought I'd start revising too late" (page 163). Although the other writers did not refer specifically to parental or teacher expectation it is obvious in their accounts that they experience enormous amounts of stress when taking examinations and have come to accept that success is extremely important.

"I always undergo stress before music examinations, situations where, if I were rational, I would realise that the basic fear is irrational, since the preparation

for these exams is always vigorous, and teachers do not enter pupils who fail... I have experienced the most uncontrollable shaking and sweating in my life. The sheer importance of a pass or fail, and the opportunity to retake any exam also pass me by.

The stress here is on the whole the fear of failure, the desire to do well first time round ..." (page 163).

And other phrases from the writing are examples of the intensity of anxiety when the girls are facing success or failure ... " when I think that I haven't done anything and I start to panic" and "the middle of the exam the most important question on that paper and my mind goes blank" (page 164). (8) It is obvious that in these accounts there is a high degree of correspondence between family and school processes of socialisation. Individual competition is a crucial element for the selection and entry into certain sections of the job structure. These processes are also structured by class as well as gendered and racist practices.

Girls face impossible contradictions from patriarchal forces both within the family and within the organisation of schools. Job availability and special status within a particular employment situation is often dependent upon fluctuations within the economy and a sexually divided labour market. I have stressed the significance of individual motivation and competition

in relation to career opportunities for the sixth form writers but Maguire and Ashton (1980) stress non-academic qualifications as important criteria for selection of potential employees. They have shown that factors such as family background, appearance, punctuality, dress and servility play an important role in obtaining employment. Girls facing entry into the labour market have to negotiate a series of contradictory messages. Images of what are considered appropriate feminine characteristics conflict with strategies needed to succeed academically. When being selected for employment, often by male supervisors, girls have to convey a specific form of femaleness together with the ability to perform relevant tasks associated with the waged situation. Schools and families play a significant role in preparing students for adult employment but these processes are structured differently by class, gender and racial division.

The written accounts produced by the white working class girls who attended the youth club were significantly more critical of the authority system experienced within their schools. These girls were aged between fifteen and sixteen, lived on a council estate and were not expected to take any examinations during their final year at school. It is obvious from their descriptive accounts of their experience within school that both gender and class differentiation occurs in such a way as to isolate and problematise their behaviour. In the following account we can see how the parents of the

supposed delinquent student form an alliance with their daughter in opposition to the attitude of the teacher who at this point was in a position of authority. The writer had been wrongly accused of theft but the teacher insisted that she was responsible and had made elaborate investigations into the offence. The girl writes in her own defence "I asked the teacher if I could ask my parents to come to the school and sort it out properly but she refused.... she knew all the time that it was not me but because I was the idiot in the class she still said it was me. My mother came up and she said she had said sorry but she never. I never forgot this". (page 46) And another girl noticed that teachers isolate some students rather than others "teachers often come out with remarks about you and your family and they will occasionally hit you if they haven't got any patience" (page 5) (9). In another issue one of the girls from the youth club group refers to a violent argument with a teacher which is again concerned with theft, lies and a challenge to the authority of the teacher. This incident also has an element of female jealousy between the teacher and student over the style of the blouse, the teacher relying upon a 'put down' in order to regain control in the situation.

The following account takes the form of a dialogue but was produced in written form. "I didn't do it on purpose", she started asking me questions I got really mad and shouted "what do you think I am - a bloody

dictionary". she said "And I don't like your blouse" and told me to get out when she came in she said "I think you owe me an apology or are you going to add to your rudeness". I said "Yes" and she said "Come on then" and I shouted "sorry". She said "I don't think that's good enough" and I said "Well it will have to be". I said "And you've got the cheek to say you don't like my blouse". I said "When you pay for it you can say whether you like it or not, but you don't so you can shut up". Then she said "Get outside my office". And I said "Don't worry I'm going". AND THAT WAS THAT" (pages 48-49) (10).

It is possible to argue that the staff of schools apply management strategies which are based upon class, gender and racist assumptions. These attitudes become part of the organisational principles of the school to the disadvantage of certain groups of students who are not successfully socialised or attitudinally orientated towards the appropriate forms of social behaviour required by the capitalist formation or patriarchal power relations.

Girls come to learn that the social relations of schools are communicated through hierarchical and patriarchal authority structures. It has been possible, using the accounts produced by the girls, to see a degree of correspondence between the organisation of the curriculum and re-inforcement of its values by middle class parents and a degree of alienation from the



bourgeois curriculum experienced by the working class writers. Not only have schools transmitted a socially divisive curriculum it has also meant that schools have communicated specific definitions of male and female expectations.

The girls from the selective grammar school were in a position to compete for higher qualifications whilst the working class girls expected to find employment within offices, hospitals, shops or nurseries. A crucial aspect of these writings is the fact that only a minority of the writers were aware that child care or marriage would affect their capacity to be fully productive in waged labour.

In this section I have attempted to show how the organisation of curriculum knowledge has advantages for middle class girls. I have also examined the ways in which control strategies affect working class and middle class female students and how patriarchal power affects female occupational choice. It has also been possible to show how the social relations of family life have influenced the career expectations of the writers across class and ethnic divisions.

The ideology of femininity and  
its relation to waged labour

In this section of the Chapter I want to concentrate upon the formation of female consciousness and the relation between ideologies of femininity and waged employment. We have established that schooling assists in the maintenance of existing social and economic arrangements which ensures the reproduction, not only of the poor and the unskilled but also of a female work force which takes upon itself the major responsibility for child care and domestic work. It is impossible to construct a neutral curriculum. The curriculum is organised in such a way as to prepare students of differing abilities for a variety of different but specific functions. But it is not only the content of curriculum options that is significant it is also very important to attempt to investigate the kinds of cultural resources and the symbolic structures which are transmitted within schools. This has considerable importance for the reproduction of male and female relations. A stratified society divided by class and male and female antagonisms depends upon certain forms of consciousness in order to function. Schools play a crucial role in the production and reproduction of consciousness and Apple suggests that as educators we should "focus on the ideological and cultural mediations which lie between the material conditions of an unequal society and the formation of the consciousness of the individuals in that society" (page 2).

Forms of female consciousness are especially significant in these discussions as we attempt to isolate the ways in which girls' identities, perceptions and expectations are legitimated through ideologies of male supremacy.

I would at this point like to utilise the concept of hegemonic ideologies as it is especially helpful when attempting to analyse how girls come to accept and challenge the conditions of their own subordination. All successful ideologies act to saturate our consciousness in such a way that we accept commonsense interpretations of the social world. Hegemony refers to a complex organised set of meanings, values and activities that make up our lived lives. For women it may include an acceptance of the fact that familial and domestic responsibilities have priority over waged work. At the heart of this chapter is an attempt to show how the girls try to make sense of their futures both as employees and as female partners. It also explores the 'dynamics' of how male hegemony is achieved, examining the ways in which women assent to a set of relations which function to their own disadvantage. The notion of hegemony also allows for a less deterministic approach to the correspondence between economics and consciousness, and we are able to analyse different forms of challenge and resistance.

Apple (1979) has indicated that there are two requirements necessary for ideological hegemony. Not only does the economic order create and structure common

sense understandings which saturate our everyday lives, it also needs a group of agents such as teachers or parents who seem to legitimate certain sets of relations making them seem either neutral or normal. When the school or family takes for granted the fact that women are to be responsible for the maintenance and servicing of the household, or that women will undertake both waged and unwaged domestic labour the main group who benefit is male. This occurs across class boundaries and ethnic groups.

When analysing the processes of schooling and the dynamics of family life we must try and establish how women consent to a series of class and gender relations which support the dominant economic structure as well as male/female relations. In this study the written accounts are an attempt to reveal how the values, attitudes, practices and perceptions of the female writers shape their future as wives, employees, partners and mothers. We are also interested in the ways in which these forms of consciousness together with material practices support both class and male interests. Arnot (1982) has suggested that "women must offer unconsciously or consciously their 'consent' to their subordination before male power is secured. They are encouraged 'freely' to choose their inferior status and to accept their exploitation as natural".

The girls in my study responded to the commonsense notion that female identity is closely associated with specific types of both waged and domestic labour. Educational practices are partially autonomous from economic and political forces and are the site of diverse pressures and struggles. One of the most significant areas of contradictions and conflict for women is the way in which they are prepared for adulthood within the family and within a career. Girls are often faced with the continuing experience of seeing female relatives and friends, together with older sisters doing jobs that give little satisfaction.

Jenny Shaw (1976) and Sue Sharpe (1976) have commented that the prospect of marriage discourages girls from long term planning in relation to careers. Sue Sharpe especially emphasises that due to a restricted view of their possible futures, working class girls are often influenced by their adult relatives and acquaintances and depress their own ambitions. We can see from the account which follows that the writer has been influenced by familial patterns and intends placing considerable emphasis upon her role as a socialising agent.

"There is the experience of the first time the child says something or takes its first step. It's good to see your love and attention with the child when the child grows up, teaching it right and wrong in life and how to be independent, caring and giving advice. You

teach the child something from your experience. When you're a mother your children kind of look on you for advice and the mother helps in a hard situation.

When the child grows up and is having his or her own children and getting married, the mother can give advice about married life and how to cope when things go wrong. Mothers always give good advice when their children are setting out in life" (page 85) (11).

Whilst this writer refers to the expressive and nurturing influence of being a mother we must not forget that many working class families rely upon the income of a school leaver, or in a time of deepening unemployment the family may depend upon a proportion of unemployment benefit. Although there is little concrete evidence to support Michelle Stanworth (1981) who has suggested "that it may well be the case that, where families are hard pressed financially, an extended education for daughters will be sacrificed to provide for sons" it was obvious that their brothers had privileged treatment. Girls are often spied upon by their brothers as the following account reveals. "I hate my brother in this school because if I talk to the boys, he tells my mum and I get in trouble. I like to wear ear-rings, necklaces, bangles and make-up" (page 6).

Another writer explains how she is expected to take a different share of domestic labour within the family

from her brother. She writes "4.00 pm. Do shopping. Make tea for brother" (page 92). (12)

Connell et al (1982) have indicated that some of our practices within both the home and school are 'masculinised' or 'feminised' and these gendered practices differ across racial and class categories. Their work refers to gender regimes which may exist at a particular time in a specific educational establishment. By analysing the ways in which certain practices become hierarchically organised and are given a certain status it is possible to see how various forms of masculinising and feminising practices are constructed. They indicate that the politics of gender are often negotiated outside the official school processes but what is of crucial importance is how school authorities respond to the hidden gender dynamics. They write "what is hegemonic at any given time depends on how the relations among different kinds of masculinity and femininity have been worked out. That negotiation is one of the key roles of the school".

But that negotiation of course is not only dependent upon the prevailing hegemonic relations between boys and girls or male and female members of staff, it is also affected by the ways in which students are perceived and treated as members of a particular social class or ethnic group.

The accounts have also referred to the gendered practices which occur within different forms of family life. Particular forms of behaviour are more acceptable within specific contexts.

The writers who attended the selective girls grammar school had very different expectations about their future careers than the other groups of girls. The working class girls opted for more stereotypically female occupations such as nursery nurse, secretary, shop worker or nurse whilst the sixth formers anticipated careers such as dentists, teachers, doctors and politicians, none of the girls however referred except in a highly ironical way, to less traditional forms of employment such as mechanics, engineers or tele-communication workers. When I talked to a head of department at this school it was obvious that the girls were encouraged to anticipate careers in a wider spectrum of occupations and there was an emphasis upon political analysis and social and economic debate. Michelle Stanworth (1981) has suggested that the teachers in her research did not take the ambitions of the girls very seriously stating that "in two thirds of male teachers' discussions of female pupils the girls could not be envisaged in any occupation once her education was complete. In some cases, it is almost as if the working lives of women are a mystery to men" (page 28).



It is perhaps important to add that the girls' grammar school had a majority of women on the staff. It is also significant that the girls were not placed in a double bind situation in which girls taught within a co-educational establishment are faced with decisions about participating in classroom discussion. If girls are passive in discussion they risk derision by their male classmates, if they speak forcefully not only do they risk disapproval by members of their own sex they are also open to particular sexist attitudes from male teachers. It is extremely important that images of what women 'are' and what they may become are integral parts not only of the schools expectations of their futures but are also supported within the family.

The girls at this school are attempting to hold in balance anticipated careers which may require a degree of assertiveness, competition and persistence with ideological forms of femininity which make it appear 'natural' and 'normal' to identify with a life centred around domesticity, child bearing and acceptable forms of approved female behaviour.

Girls have to hold together certain aspects of their lives which are circumscribed by factors such as ethnicity, class and gender, and to attempt to make new understandings acknowledging that academic success is worthwhile but trying not to be seen as an academic studious sort of woman. In the following extract one of the writers after struggling with the images presented

in "Jackie" magazine writes "looking back on it now, I reproach these 'Jackie' magazines for trying to make me grow up before I was ready to accept my sexuality and most of all for crushing any individualism making me "one of the crowd". I have spent three years struggling to regain something which should never have been lost. "Looking attractive" seems to be what all Jackie magazines dwell on, whereas I have come to realise an alert mind is much more attractive - for self respect. Maybe 'clever' girls frighten men, but in the long run they will find it more of an asset" (page 168) (13).

The girls in the grammar school, supported by their families and their female teachers, despite enormous anxiety about taking examinations and failing their parents did see themselves as having a measure of choice, seeing themselves as active agents in control of their own futures. The working class girls however did not always see success as personal ability but rather as the product of a lucky break. They often feared failure in their jobs and as wives, seeing failure as a lack of ability or an individual deficiency, not a product of a particular set of unequal social relations. Not only does the writer in the following account fear personal rejection, she is also afraid of the reaction of her family if her partnership breaks down.

"The worst thing I am frightened of is being left out of things and nobody wanting to know me... I am also afraid

of letting the family down and other people. For most women nowadays they have to be more determined and show people that being a woman is something and not being a woman stuck in the house doing the washing up, ironing and cooking etc" (page 69).

And another writer voices her concern about faith in her ability to do her job well, keeping in contact with her family and maintaining a partnership.

"At work           - fear of redundancy  
                      - fear of not getting a staff nurse or  
                          sister's job even though I have all the  
                          qualifications. Fear of being a sister  
                          in charge of a ward for the first time.  
                          Hoping I will remain caring and  
                          considerate.

At home           - Fear of not having the home I want, a  
                          feeling of inadequacy  
                      - Fear of drifting apart from my mother  
                          and father.

Relationships - I would probably be married, my fear of  
                          rowing over trivial things. Not knowing  
                          what to cook for dinner.

- Fear of drifting apart because our lives  
take totally different courses. Hoping  
that we will be happy" (page 65) (14).

With reference to the data produced by the girls I have attempted in this chapter to show some of the aspects of 'lived responses' of the girls to the way in which they experience the relationship between schooling and female waged and domestic labour. I have attempted to show how structures of male power operate within the family, school and place of employment emphasising the fact that within a family of a specific social class boys and girls may inhabit different social worlds. I have attempted to show how ideological constructs are 'at work'. However ideology is not just a matter of detailing or analysing social practices. In order to maintain a dominant position hegemonic ideologies have to contain and withstand certain tensions and contradictions. When women are unaware of the contradictions contained within their situation in the family it is difficult for them to see any other situation than the existing set of circumstances. I would like to re-inforce the fact that dominant ideologies often mask contradictions which characterise social practices and social relations. Ideology has to be structurally re-inforced as Perkins (1979) has stated "women and blacks may be legislatively defined as equal but the major determinant of their ideological position remains their structural position... the conditions of their existence, differences between social groups are the work of ideology's effectivity" (page 137).

The black and Asian writers in this study rarely wrote specifically about issues concerned with their ethnic

and female employment patterns. It is, however, obvious from some of their writing that they have been influenced by the experiences of their mothers, grandmothers and aunts who have occupied jobs which have long hours and low pay. Some of the writers would be in homes where home working was common place with little room for study and quiet.

Girls from ethnic minorities experience schooling and entry into employment training differently to their female white peers. The structure of the female labour market ensures that black and Asian female labour is subjected to the lowest paid and most vulnerable areas of employment. Perkins (1979) has referred to the ideological position of black and Asian women which is based upon their structural position. Anthias and Yuval Davis (1983) refer to ideological constructs which divide people into different collectivities based upon material practices. The process of schooling often reproduces racism which affects the ways in which black and Asian girls prepare for waged employment.

Career expectations between the different classes were very different. The writers from the ethnic minorities anticipated working in shops, offices, hospitals and nurseries as the following accounts show.

"My Job in Woolworths

7.30 am      Get up, wash face, go to the toilet, comb hair, put make up on".

8.00 am      Make breakfast, brush teeth, go to the bus stop.

9.15 am      Go to Woolworths, take coat off, put on working coat, sit in staff room, talk. Go and start work" (page 38) (15).

Others want to work in a Post Office, go to college or work in a hospital.

#### My Day as a Nurse

7.30 am      Get up, wash. Have breakfast if I feel like it.

8.00 am      Leave the house.

8.30 am      Reach the hospital and start changing into my uniform.

9.15 am      Start working

11.00 am     Getting busy with patients.

11.30 am     Get the patients ready to go for dinner.

12 noon      Having dinner.

1.00 pm      Talking and taking all patients to beds.

3.00 pm      Have a drink.

4.00 pm      Phone a friend or relative.

4.30 pm      Give patients a cake, toast, etc.

5.00 pm      Leave the hospital.

5.30 pm      Go to the shop on the way home.

6.00 pm      Reach home and have a cup of tea or coffee.

(page 96) (16).

None of the writers refer directly to their ethnic or cultureal backgrounds when anticipating their lives in waged work. One Asian writer sees waged labour as a time which preceeds marriage. She also sees her wage as contributing to her wedding. She also indicates that she will not be living alone with her husband but in a form of extended family. She writes "when I'm twenty years old I'll be probably married and living with my husband and his family if they're here. If I'm not married I'll be still working and earning money for my wedding. I would like to marry a boy who I know, but from a different country. But before I do get married I would like to do a course on nursery nursing. The place I'm looking forward to go to get married is Singapore which is in Malaysia" (page 105) (17).

Whilst this writer indicates that waged labour is a preparation for marriage this would not be the case for all the Asian writers in this study. Many times the teachers of the Asian writers referred to the 'problem' of arranged marriages. The idea of freely choosing a marriage partner is considered superior to the notion of a marriage contract involving the integration of two families.

Not only were Asian girls treated differently in relation to patterns of marriage and low expectations within wage labour but Afro-Caribbean girls were often treated in terms of their so called "sexual aggressiveness".

Careers advice and career expectations of black and Asian girls are often founded on stereo-typical ideas which push Afro-Caribbean girls into low paid, low status jobs whilst Asian girls are presumed to become engulfed in family networks.

An important element in this chapter has been concerned with the degree to which girls take into account their relationships and dependency upon men when making decisions about their future careers. It is also important to look at both male and female teachers' expectations of their female students and isolate the ways in which the expectations of middle class parents and teachers coincide and influence the choices of their daughters and female students. It is also crucial to analyse the ways in which working class girls, especially those from ethnic minorities, become alienated from the middle class organisation of the school curriculum seeking identity within their own cultural backgrounds, in motherhood and a close association with family life and male approval.

We have also noticed that non-academic qualifications such as compliance, clean appearance and acceptable social inter-change are crucial aspects of job suitability. It is important to notice that working class students who are not attitudinally socialised as acceptable employees stand very little chance of gaining waged work whilst the one middle class girl who



continually criticised her school, her mother and the structure of school knowledge was considered very intelligent indeed and by the time I had begun to write up my thesis had obtained a place at Oxford University.

Girls and boys as members of a specific social class are prepared differentially for waged labour. The central concern when educating boys is to prepare them specifically for a life time of waged labour. Girls are also prepared for waged labour through educational process but the choices they consider are often made in relation to their place within the family. When choosing a job or a career girls are most likely to opt for a position which does not endanger their femininity whilst boys are less likely to have to consider aspects of their masculinity when considering waged work.

This chapter has attempted to show, with evidence provided from the girls' writings, that educational processes are essential to the reproduction of the social relations of production as well as the social relations of the family. Schooling, together with other agencies, helps in the production of conditions which sustain capitalist and patriarchal structures of power. Some of the gendered practices of both schools and family organisation assist in the control and distribution of economic, cultural and patriarchal power. The following chapter will attempt to reveal how girls come to consent to some of those practices.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

The gaining of consent and the significance of dissent:

Girls' attempts to resist class and patriarchal control

In this chapter I want to explore, with evidence supplied by the writings, the ways in which schooling, together with the family assists in the process of reproducing both class and gender relations. I am especially interested in using Gramsci's notion of hegemony in order to show how bourgeois notions of the neutrality of schooling are false, often masking and manipulating the nature of the relationship between schooling and the economy. After examining the political nature of the organisation of the curriculum I hope to develop my analysis to show how the 'work' of the family and the 'work' of schooling is affected by male hegemony. I want also to demonstrate how the process of schooling is dominated by ideological imperatives which attempt to gain the consent of women to definitions of femininity which direct them towards domesticity and secondary positions within waged work. It is also the case that men have to be won over to a future in which they are considered primary wage earners and responsible fathers. By ensuring that men and women are successfully consenting to these roles we can be assured of the necessary ideological conditions for production and reproduction to be maintained. One of the most significant aspects of ideologies which

support specific definitions of male and female identities is the way in which inequalities are concealed. When women consent to socially constructed and historically specific definitions of femininity they also consent to both capitalist relations and patriarchal power relations. By consenting to these social arrangements they submit to certain structural relations which maintain their own subordination. In this way we can analyse the ways in which contradictions are concealed and begin to understand how the interests of the dominant class and sex function. It is therefore crucial in this chapter to examine which of the processes of resistance attempted by the girls are influenced by ideological or material factors. It is also essential to discuss the ways in which the relationship between patriarchy and the economic structure perpetuates male hegemonic control.

I hope also in this chapter to examine ideological aspects of the ways in which femininity is constructed, looking at the notion of familialism, domesticity, and attempts by the Right to emphasise the centrality of the family, especially designating women to a specific role within the family. I will be concerned with these ideological aspects of the construction of femininity and the ways in which they are related to the policies of the Right at a time of recession, and in relation to the structure of employment and cutbacks in the Welfare State. Rosemary Deem (1981) has suggested "women play

an important role in that social reproductive processes not just because they bear children but because, to varying degrees in different historical periods they are expected to take on the responsibilities of caring for and socialising children, performing free domestic labour for paid workers and caring for the sick and elderly".

But firstly I would like to look at the ways in which the state, by using the agencies of civil society, especially schools and families, affects the political and social performances by which subjects see and perceive themselves within a society. It is a crucial function of hegemonic ideological processes to reflect or gather together the individual or collective identity of groups within a specific society. The aspirations, possibilities and limitations must not conflict with the requirements of the dominant means of production.

One of the key elements associated with Gramsci's notion of hegemony is concerned with the fact that within capitalist social formations the state brings about not only a unison of economic and political aims but is also involved in unifying intellectual and moral forces. In securing hegemony the state is involved in forming alliances, resisting opposition and at all costs attempts to impose a unity upon competing factions in order to sustain the conditions for expanded and continuing production. In this way dominant ideologies cannot be simply reduced to the ideology of one economic

class. In order to understand how hegemony is achieved, and it is never totally achieved, it is crucial to analyse the political, civil and cultural organisation of everyday life. By doing this we are assured of an insight into the ways in which men and women consent to social, political and economic relationships which do not operate in their best interests. We are also made aware of the existence of oppositional ideological forces and the strengths and weaknesses of the accompanying strategies.

When we refer to the concept of hegemony it must be stressed that dominant ideologies are not 'given', nor are they necessarily imposed by the dominant class. Johnson (1979b) suggests "ideologies become hegemonic when they make a contribution to the process by which common sense is made to conform to the necessities of production and to the construction of consent and a political order" Ideologies are also instrumental in achieving reform and change.

This process of gaining consent is not achieved without considerable opposition and is an uneven and problematic process. The success or failure of the state in securing hegemonic control is dependent upon the state of oppositional forces. By using such a notion we can see the significance of competing and contradictory ideologies which may affect, modify or transform attempts to gain hegemonic control. It also challenges

Althusser's theory of the school as an ideological state apparatus which functions in order to reproduce without difficulty both classed and gendered subjects. Kellner (1978) has pointed out the ways in which hegemonic ideologies affect the process of social reproduction. He emphasises the complexity and contradictions which are constituent elements of hegemonic ideologies showing how they often incorporate aspects of older traditions, such as the importance of dignity and liberalism with competitive aspects of the capitalist enterprise and the possessive individual. It is also important to observe that hegemonic ideologies are forced into incorporating elements of emergent ideas. Kellner writes "hegemonic ideology is thus flexible, adapting to changing historical conditions and oppositional struggles, and is often full of contradictions as it makes concessions to oppositional groups" (page 51)

Kellner's (1978) analysis places us in a position to be able to see and to use oppositional strategies in order to challenge the imposition of dominant ideologies. We can see the significance of struggle and are aware that hegemony has to be constantly imposed. One of the ways in which hegemonic ideologies function is to displace or distort the reality of antagonistic relations such as class or gender relations. This can be done in a variety of ways one of which is to reconstitute the individual into a collective such as 'the community', 'the work force' or 'the voice of women'. There is an attempt to impose an imaginary unity upon contesting



factions. Hall (1977b) states "unities are once again produced; but now in forms which mask and displace the level of class relations and economic contradictions and represent them as non-antagonistic totalities" (page 338)

The notion of hegemony therefore is crucial to our understanding of the state, together with other agencies such as political parties, press, church and school, are responsible for achieving hegemonic control. It is the purpose of counter-hegemonic activity to unmask and reveal the ways in which common-sense has been utilised to achieve hegemonic control. Hegemony works at a variety of levels in order to achieve a conformity of interest which serves the forces of production. Gramsci, unlike Althusser who was writing thirty years later, does not draw rigid distinctions between the repressive and ideological state apparatus. He thinks that both are united in their attempt to maintain class rule, but at times he uses the terms distinctively in order to emphasise the ways in which different elements of state and civil society correspond to different forms of hegemonic activity.

In the following passage we see how Gramsci conceptualises the function of different apparatus in organising hegemony.

"Every state is ethical in as much as one of its most important functions is to raise the great mass of the

population to a particular cultural and moral level, a level which corresponds to the needs of the productive forces for development and hence to the interests of the ruling classes. The school has a positive educative function, and what counts as a repressive and negative educative function are the most important state activities in this sense: but in reality a multitude of other so called 'private' initiatives and activities which form the apparatus of the political and cultural hegemony of the ruling classes".

I would like to isolate from these ~~apparatuses~~ the sphere of schooling and try and establish the extent (and the limitations) to which schooling reproduces specific forms of class and gender consciousness, specifically looking at the ideological and hegemonic activities of both the school and the family.

In earlier chapters we have established the fact that schooling is inextricably interwoven with the maintenance of capitalist production. It is also essential to try and unravel some of the processes which occur in schools and are part of the state's attempt to impose hegemonic control. We have already noted that hegemony is never totally achieved but is a process by which dominant classes and groups attempt to gain the consent of other less powerful groups. Education is part of the state and as such actively takes part in the process of gaining hegemonic control. But such an imposition cannot be achieved easily nor without

enormous amounts of coercion. Hegemonic control is a continuing process which involves compromise, negotiation, conflict and struggle.

Let us briefly look at some of the ways in which the girls consented to a future in which 'common sense understandings' of their roles as wives and mothers can be seen to be associated with the requirements not only of capitalist production but also to the maintenance of male hegemony. Later I will isolate some of the girls' responses which challenged and attacked the imposition of both class and gender definitions.

My work shows that all the girls in my study were influenced by the notion of familialism. The sources of those influences were varied and girls from different educational backgrounds and social classes differed in the ways in which they responded to domesticity, motherhood and partnership. To put this more clearly whilst both working class and middle class girls are subjected to an exaggerated identification with the world of the family and its attendant power relations, working class girls seem to identify very strongly either with their future partner's class position or they form strong alliances with other members of the family or other working class friends. When referring to their future lives it was obvious that the majority of the working class girls in my study subjugated any career prospects to an identification with the family

where they would become a major influence in socialising their children. It is worth stating at this point that the working class girls would be fortunate if they obtained jobs let alone had the opportunity to pursue careers.

One girl writes "the best thing about having children is that if my husband has gone to work and I have not got a job the children will be company and a comfort" (page 17). And commenting upon the obvious economic strain on a working class partnership another writer explains "when you go out in the evenings you shall have to find a baby sitter and pay her. So by paying her and spending an evening out could turn out to be very expensive" (page 16). There is often an acceptance that shift work, market trading, or family business will keep husbands away from home. We find frequent references to the girls wanting to be with their children. The following accounts refer to the companionship of children .....

....."the best thing about having children is when your husband is out and you will have company" (page 19) or "the worst thing about being a mother is staying at home on your own while your husband has gone to work and your children are at school if you have any" (page 86). There are frequent references to the necessary requirements of a wife in which we see that the girls seem to accept the structure of unequal power relations in the household. Writing about this experience one girl comments "you'll be busy doing all the housework

and when it's time for your husband to come home you'll have to prepare their meals" (page 85) (1)

These accounts of course refer to the ways in which girls of fifteen view motherhood, other writers such as Hobson (1978) and New and David (1985) have indicated that mothers experience considerable periods of isolation when not engaged in waged work.

In these accounts I seem to be suggesting that particular ideologies which associate girls with domesticity and by so doing withdraw them from wage labour, are unilaterally and uniformly imposed upon identically situated working class girls. This implies that a highly specific form of *familialism* has been unproblematically imposed upon the girls and this theory has more in common with Althusser and Bowles and Gintis than with theorists such as Apple, Anyon or Arnot. It is crucial that we are able to recognise the extent to which ideology, consciousness or the process of gaining consent determines thought and action. The work of Freud (1977c) and Lacan (1966) also refer to the ways in which ideology acts upon the unconscious.

Gramsci suggests that hegemonic control is never completely achieved which leaves us in a position to consider the place and importance of counter hegemonic struggle. For the girls the process of conforming to notions of motherhood and partnership were contingent

upon economic and cultural forces. Rosemary Deen (1981) has drawn our attention to the relationship between state policy, ideology and the education of women. Social policy, educational opportunities for women, and the needs of capitalist forces of production are shown to be associated with specific ideologies about women such as women's 'natural' motherliness or about the nature of femininity and intellectual capability. These changing ideologies are linked with the needs of the economy and based on assumptions about the nature of family relationships, especially emphasising the differing roles of women and men in times of recession.

Deen (1981) refers to the demand for an increased participation in wage labour in the sixties. She argues that state policies concerned with women's education acknowledged the fact that women were entering the labour force in greater numbers. Particular ideologies supported this transition but were soon amended at the time of recession. In a time of expansion welfare provision and social services relieved women of a certain amount of responsibility but as the need for full time female labour decreased there has been an emphasis upon the significance of motherhood. Victorian family morals, and the importance of the presence of the woman within the heart of family life. Deen (1981) writes "the state's apparatus attempt to hide the gravity of the economic situation from women by ideological emphasis on motherhood, women's place in the

home and the family which mask the real problems facing women" (page 141).

The following accounts indicate some of the ways in which ideological forms of what is considered appropriate to motherhood have affected the consciousness of the writers. It is also possible to identify restrictions imposed by male members of the household.

.... "the worst thing about being a mother is that you can't go out in the evenings, you can't go out shopping alone ... you don't get much freedom or going out any more with your friends without your husband arguing" (page 87). Another girl writes about the limitations of pregnancy .... "you cannot go out to discos, parties or any other lively evening out in case you get hurt" (page 16) (2) .

For a moment I would like to draw attention to the fact that not only are these girls 'consenting' to both working class and female definitions of their future roles they are also exposed to racist ideological forces which work with other taken for granted assumptions to form hegemonic control which is not only bourgeois and patriarchal but also racist.

The Asian girls in my study have encountered a series of assumptions which are not only racist but also sexist in their construction. These assumptions are often

reproduced through schooling, the media and the welfare state. Issues such as language, cultural patterns, marriage arrangements, and sexual behaviour have often been located within the school and seen as problems; differences which need rectifying or seen as racial problems, the solution to which lies through integration. Teachers often assume that Asian girls will encounter problems around arranged marriages and that future employment will be severely restricted. Amos and Parmar (1981) have suggested that newspapers, television documentaries and some teachers see the practice of arranged marriage as the main means by which Asian women are oppressed. Whilst not denying that arranged marriages and those practiced by white British culture are oppressive, Amos and Parmar write "the overall stereo-typical image is that of Asian girls caught between two cultures, her parents' culture and the culture of her white English peers. Asian girls are said to see their white friends at school or work going to discos and films and 'choosing' their own boyfriends and potential husbands, while they (the poor Asian girls) are forced into a marriage with someone who is usually twice their age, someone who doesn't understand the English romantic etiquette like white men do and, of course, someone whom they have never seen until the actual wedding ceremony .... If Asian girls had the same degree of so called 'choice' about their marriage then it would help to create a more integrated society. Invariably, it's the parents with their archaic ideas who are seen as stopping this integration



into white British society" (page 141)

I would like now to show how white bourgeois hegemony is maintained by a process of obtaining the consent of the white majority to a perception of members of ethnic minorities as a problem. William's in defining the process of hegemony states "it is a set of meanings and values which as they are experienced as practices appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a reality for most people in society, a sense of absolute experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of society to move in most areas of their lives".

Most sociological literature produced on the black community deals with the problems of cultural conflict, and cultural norms and values are the supposed reason for racial conflict, unemployment, inner city violence and educational failure. In an attempt to unify 'common sense' understandings of racial conflict the state has attempted through a series of Immigration and Nationality Acts (1962, 1968, 1971, 1981) to blame social conflict upon the arrival of an 'alien' community. In order to resolve this racial conflict it has been suggested that ethnic minorities accept the white bourgeois values of British society. By adopting white cultural patterns of dress, diet, language and sexual behaviour it would be possible to have an integrated society. If the black community will not accept these cultural values they only have themselves

to blame.

Racism saturates the consciousness of British society in as much as we blame ethnic communities for overcrowding, unemployment, and social unrest. Black family life is perceived as being different and is often ridiculed if it does not conform to the stereotypical white nuclear family. Asian families are perceived in a number of 'common sense ways' as being large and closely knit, as being sexually divided, and having different patterns of sexual relationship. By eating different food, wearing different clothes and speaking another language Asian families are conceptualised as a threat to white bourgeois hegemony. If it is possible to produce an ideological totality such as 'the immigrant community', 'the arranged system of marriage' or 'black sexuality' we can see how a unity is produced of common sense understandings which masks not only class and gender antagonisms but which also neglects to confront the racist character of British society. I hope in the next accounts to show that white bourgeois hegemony is never secure, there are many contradictions both within and between hegemonic ideologies which provides space for oppositional strategies.

It is often class and cultural background that unify different social groups. Concepts such as 'freedom' and 'choice' are relative and conceptualised within both economic and ideological constraints.

Asian girls do not all experience identical sets of social arrangements within the home, some parents exert more control than others, and most of the girls in my study did not express any feelings of being imprisoned within their homes. Rather they expressed a desire to share and plan their futures with their parents, emphasising the positive and constructive attitudes of their parents especially when writing about family life. I would like to suggest that white bourgeois hegemony has been maintained because at specific historical periods British society has been convinced of the 'alien' character of ethnic minorities. Although Davies (1981) is referring to a general definitions of hegemonic control his comments are particularly opposite to a racist society "hegemony is a concept which directs us to thinking through how ideologies are produced as subjectivities and lived experiences that appear to be natural and unchangeable. Hegemony is sustained precisely because such cultural and social practices appear to be so 'natural' and unquestionable to those experiencing them" (page 57)

It is interesting for a moment to comment upon the ways in which the ethnic communities have become problematised and victimised. The use of the concept of 'immigration' and the surrounding ideological supports of the notion of an 'overcrowded island' came together to create an atmosphere of terror and fear which produced (and produces) social conflict. Margaret Thatcher writing on population in 1978 stated "it is not

as if we have great wide open spaces or great national resources: we have not .... so either you go on taking in 40,000 or 50,000 a year, which is far too many, or you hold out a clear end to immigration" Actual statistics indicate that at the time of producing these statements the population of Great Britain was lower than in nineteen seventy three and had been falling successively.

Also in post-war Britain up until nineteen seventy five there was a movement in population from inner city areas to low cost housing on private estates on the edge of larger cities together with more available local authority housing, Social and economic decline in the inner city, due to the collapse of the manufacturing industries, has meant that skilled labour has left these areas leaving an 'urban problem' which has been blamed in some instances upon the ethnic communities.

I am attempting to show that the ways in which the ethnic communities have been problematised is intimately connected to the need for a cheap labour force at a time of economic expansion which was relatively short lived. The New Commonwealth immigrants become a replacement work force accompanying low paid and menial positions, often in competition with the unskilled white labourers for jobs and resources such as accommodation, welfare benefits, and health services.

Whilst the demand for cheap labour was of enormous importance it must also be observed amongst other factors such as economic conditions within ex-colonies where there was extreme poverty. British citizens from the New Commonwealth countries were encouraged to see Great Britain as a mother country.

As Tierney (1982) has written "in this situation it was inevitable that immigrants came to be seen as the cause, rather than the victims of inner-city decay. Racist ideology is confirmed by the material experiences of the white working class" (page 21).

Social attitudes about other cultural groups are often reflected in the practices and processes which occur within schools. Not only can we observe the ways in which racism is reproduced but we can also see that racism is deeply embedded within the consciousness of British society. Social constructions of class, gender and Euro-centric domination, with racist ideologies may come together to produce 'certain commonsense understandings'. As Gramsci says "hegemony constitutes the limit of common sense for most people under its sway, that it corresponds to the reality of social experience". It is the task of counter hegemonic activities to expose some of the myths that associate so called 'common sense' with social reality.

But I would like now to show some examples of the ways in which some of the girls did not easily accept

definitions of a future which was associated with domesticity, motherhood and poor wages. By so doing I hope to reveal how class and gender come into contradiction. As we examine some of the paradoxes we may be able to expose the complexity and intricacy which are characteristic of class and gender reproduction. Madeleine Arnot (1981) has written "women I would argue do not easily conform to the functional requirements of capital nor to the demands of men". It is an impossible task to separate out either sets of social relations but I have attempted in the following accounts to analyse the simultaneous process by which patriarchal relations operate and affect the reproduction of class and gender relations. It is also important to recognise that the family and the school do not always work inseparably to produce gendered beings. Girls placed between the differing expectations of home life and the competitiveness of schooling are sometimes placed in a confusing and contradictory position, as the following account shows.

"In ten years time the thing that will stop me going to the top of my chosen profession will be lack of self confidence. I will probably take a lot from my employer, e.g. late nights, dirty jokes, but not sexual harassment. At home I will either be living with someone or alone. My failings there will be that probably I would not want to get married and have children. I would also fail my boyfriend if he was a

talkative type all the time. I would like to keep contact with my parents but by that time I would not give in to them as I would of before. As my mother is very possessive and tries to run my life and would not be able to. My failings in being social with people is that I like being the centre of attention and when I get that I don't want it. I could also be left alone, but this would lead to problems if no-one invited me to parties any more when I feel like company. I would like children but not until I am in my 30's and of course if I was married then my husband would want children right away" (page 66) (3 ).

I would not claim that this account represents an aggressive challenge to the imposition of either class or male forms of hegemonic control. I would however draw attention to the way in which the girl is positioned between the family, employment, and the potential world of domestic life. It is her confused and bewildered response that I think is of importance. I would like to analyse the ways in which the writer 'negotiates different terms' as she lives through the experience of two forms of social struggle, resisting both class and patriarchal constraints.

It would be foolish if I were to suggest that the writer had lost confidence because of her failure at school or because of an over-powering male, teacher, father or brother.

In fact she refers to a possessive mother. I would however speculate that the writer has encountered criticism and competitiveness which may have denied expression of personal experience and the significance of emotional life. Virginia Woolf (1929), Adrienne Rich (1985), Daly (1978), Rowbotham (1979) and Friedman (1985) have affirmed women's right to be acknowledged as human being who have the authority to think, feel, and work on their own terms. In other words women should be accepted for the 'womanliness' not upon male based assessments of success. It may well be that the writer has been in a school where she felt her experience was trivialised, she may have found competitiveness with other students problematic which resulted in passivity and lack of confidence in her ability to think independently. When reading the account it is possible to isolate three areas of inadequacy. The writer refers to a lack of confidence as far as a career is concerned, she is confused about possible marriage and motherhood, and feels that her male partner may also be a dominating influence, commanding attention and wanting to have children if they married in their '30s'. It is interesting that the writer thinks that she will be able to resist any attempts from her employer over sexual harassment and that as an adult she feels that she will be able to resist pressure from her parents. It is significant also that when the writer is expressing her expectations of her future she includes in her description not only her employment opportunities but also her relationship to her partner, motherhood and her



parents. It would be interesting to investigate how a sixteen year old male would anticipate a future in ten years' time. I think this account, along with the majority of the writings, emphasises Madeleine Arnot's (1982) argument in which she suggests that it is impossible to analyse patterns of gender reproduction without analysing patterns of class control and class struggle. Any educational strategy for change will remain inadequate unless our theoretical basis for analysis is thoroughly coherent. Arnot (1980b) writes "in so far as class relations constitute the primary element of the capitalist social formation they limit and structure the form of gender relations, the division between male and female properties and identities. I do not believe that one can dissociate the ideological forms of masculinity and femininity, in their historical specificity from either the material basis of patriarchy nor from the class structure. If one definition of femininity or masculinity is dominant, it is the product of patriarchal relations and also the product of class dominance, even though these two structures may exist in contradiction" (page 30).

Later in this chapter I wish to refer to some of the assumptions and procedures which characterise the organisation of the school curriculum and by so doing consolidate hegemonic control not only within the school but also within other areas of civil society. At this point it is important to try and assess how the writer

attempted to deal with certain contradictions and try and situate her confusion within current debates concerned with ideologies of sexual difference. By following a curriculum which emphasises individual achievement and the significance of individual performance and competition working class students are often faced with a situation in which they have little control over their experience, some of which is actually denied or denigrated.

The writer feels that she lacks assertiveness to reach a well paid job but her aspirations may be limited by class associations. She is also aware that her life as a woman may include some humiliation from men, but at the same time she resists immediate marriage, and also wants to have a measure of independence from an overpowering mother. The whole picture is quite unlike earlier examples of working class girls who seemed to accept their place within class and patriarchal relations. We have observed in earlier chapters the ways in which boys and girls have been prepared for adult employment and we have noted different sexual divisions within the occupational structure and seen how the different sets of social relations in waged labour and the family affect boys and girls in different ways. Whilst I can detect within the writings certain similar patterns between accounts written by girls of the same class such as dependence upon a male wage, there are also differences in expectations which link those experiences with female members of another class.

In the following account the working class writer is able to anticipate some of the contradictions which seem inevitable if she moves across class boundaries by pursuing a nursing career. From the account again it is possible to identify constant areas of anxiety about being competent as a nurse even though she is confident about her academic ability. She is expecting to be married but realises that their lives may be deeply divided. Her recurring fear is that the job will separate her from her parents. By entering a middle class profession it is possible that her energy will be absorbed in her work, rather than with assistance within the parental household. This may mean having to identify with the world of waged employment rather than the unpaid labour of the home. This indicates that female members of the working class who wish to pursue a career must recognise that in order to maintain their career status the place of work becomes increasingly separated from the domestic sphere. Working class girls have to accommodate to bourgeois competitiveness in order to gain academic entrance into middle class professions. Having successfully resisted the imposition of class control she will have now, along with her middle class sisters, to adjust to bourgeois ideals of femininity. In the following account the girl expresses her strengths and weaknesses at home, at work and within her marriage.

## Ten years time

### My weaknesses at work

\_\_\_\_\_ fear of redundancy.

\_\_\_\_\_ fear of not getting a staff nurse or sister's job even though I have all the qualifications. Fear of being a sister in charge of the ward for the first time. Hoping I will remain caring and considerate.

### My weaknesses at home

Fear of not having the home I want, a feeling of inadequacy.

Fear of drifting apart from my mother and father.

### My weaknesses in relationships

I would probably be married, my fear of rowing over trivial things. Not knowing what to cook for dinner.

Fear of drifting apart because our lives take totally different courses. Hoping that we will always be happy.

### My strengths at work

Knowing if I work hard I will become a competent nurse, knowing I do have an inner strength to take charge of the ward full of people whose lives I control that I do care for others and my feelings will ever change throughout my career.

### My strengths at home

Being truthful and talking out things we do with our lives and how it affects us both. Working to have a

baby knowing we are happy and will always remain so"  
(page 55).

I hope, by including the last two accounts, to have shown that social reproduction is not easily achieved, that some girls do attempt to cross class boundaries, but most girls when confronted with decisions about their future are faced, not only with a sexual division of labour within employment but also with an unequal domestic division of labour within the home. These accounts are an attempt to show that we cannot investigate the experience of girls within schooling and the home without analysing some of discontinuities which occur as the girls negotiate their way through different sets of class and gender divisions.

We have noted that hegemonic ideologies are not imposed by direct control and despite the fact that classes and men and women exist in relations of inequality all attempts to challenge those relations affects the organisation of social life. The perceptions of the writers anticipate the nature of their adult lives and so we cannot 'know' how these perceptions will affect their decision making. It is however noticeable that the girls are not accepting the limitations of a female working class life nor are they fully associating with an ideology of domesticity and familism.

It is important to remember that the context in which the girls are writing is dominated by attempts by the

New Right to emphasise the importance of domesticity and motherhood, centrally locating mothers within the home outside full paid employment. Welfare provisions are being decreased thus making it much more difficult for women to leave their partners and receive state support. As Eisenstein (1982) has written "the New Right desires to establish the model of the traditional white patriarchal family by dismantling the welfare state and by removing wage earning women from the labour force and returning them to the home" (page 568).

Margaret Thatcher speaking at the Tory Party Conference in 1977 referred to the fact that "we are the party of the family" (4). Not only have women's jobs been cut back but also many public services. The New Right's position on the place of family life seems only applicable to those who are not affected by a much reduced system of welfare provision. The privatisation of certain aspects of education, health care, care of the elderly and housing has meant that mothers have borne an enormous amount of extra burdens of responsibility. Not only physically and emotionally but by taking on additional responsibility for the material and 'moral' circumstances of their children. When women are placed in this position they also become responsible for their own adequacy as wives and mothers and also for their own economic position. The policies of the New Right have ensured that women continue to undertake undervalued and unpaid labour.

It also ensures a return to patriarchal power relations as women are withdrawn from waged labour into unpaid labour.

I would like now to address the question concerned with the role of schooling in the social reproduction of the female waged and domestic labour force. The class or sex that is dominant in the mode of production cannot entirely rule by coercion or even by controlling the economic process. The dominant group has to use other agencies in an attempt to gain the consent of other groups and classes to socially antagonistic relations. We have seen that hegemonic control is never fully achieved and never uncontested. Contending forces come together in every part of civil and state activity, and no more so than within the school.

So many of the key factors within teaching, which are related to the capitalist production process, appear as normal and acceptable. Gender difference can be accepted as unproblematic and many of the rituals and procedures of school life are underwritten by a division based on sexual difference. But the most obvious feature of schools is the way in which academic achievement and individual performance is rewarded. This process reinforces the notion of the possessive individual giving individual reward for individual labour. This procedure is rarely questioned and avidly pursued. It produces not only 'attitudinally' socialised workers but good citizens and potential

consumers. The domination of the possessive individual distorts our understanding of our social relations and dependence upon other members of society. Schooling is instrumental in producing adults who as Williams (1951) writes "think of my money in naive terms, because parts of our very idea of society are withered at root. We can hardly have any conception in our present system, of the financing of social purposes from the social product, a method which would show us in real terms, what our society is and does. In a society whose products depend almost entirely on intricate and continuous co-operation and social organisation we expect to consume as if we were isolated individuals, making our own way" (page 200).

Schools are organised in such a way that certain classes of students are stratified both economically and socially. They are also organised in such a way that boys and girls are subjected to different pressures and expectations. Knowledge too assumes a neutral quality as if it exists outside economic and political relations. Apple (1979, 1982) has begun to look critically at educational activity both politically and economically and has suggested that the 'politics of knowledge distribution' should be situated within the 'real' social relationships of class and gender division. Quoting Wirth (1936) he writes "the most important things we can know about a man is what he takes for granted, and the most elemental and important



facts about a society are those that are seldom debated and generally regarded as settled".

Schools process both people and knowledge and by so doing act as agents of cultural and ideological hegemony. They may assist in the production of adults who see no possibility of questioning existing class and gender division. It is therefore crucial to begin to make problematic not only forms of curricula organisation and class control but also forms of ideological control such as those associated with forms of family life in which girls are 'over associated' with domestic activity. We can then establish certain relationships between school knowledge and economic and patriarchal systems of domination.

In the following examples I want to illustrate how some girls negotiated a position when faced with contradictions produced by attempts to impose both class and gender identities. It is particularly important to observe the ways in which the girls deal with those contradictions and to ask ourselves whether or not they challenge existing forms of hegemonic control.

When I referred to the writings of the working class girls whether from the ethnic minority groups or from white working class backgrounds I have indicated that the girls almost entirely express a sense of family solidarity, often feeling guilty when they realise that movement across class boundaries may result in some form

of conflict or isolation. Forms of resistance to authority and achievement differ quite significantly across class boundaries in my study. The middle class girls found themselves in direct competition with boys from their own class. They responded to these sets of circumstances in a variety of ways. In almost every account the girls accepted that competition was inevitable and they expected to gain a place at university and anticipated a career. At this level they fully accepted the school's and family's expectations and by accommodating to these aspirations they also reproduced the accompanying class relations. It is at the level of reproducing gender relations that we can notice the ways in which the girls attempted to fulfil their career aspirations, avoid marriage but also become acceptable as feminine women. In the struggle to impose bourgeois definitions of femininity we can see that responses within classes differed. There are considerable differences between the responses of working class and middle class girls at attempts to impose patriarchal relations.

Without exception all the middle class girls were ready to compete with male members of their class in order to gain admission to higher educational establishments and to challenge situations in which they were expected to accept male definitions of their role within their partnerships. They found it relatively easy to compete with their male peers for educational advantage and

entrance into higher education. It is when they are faced with domestic responsibility and the demands of career that they face contradictions and begin to challenge existing patterns of domestic division of labour. Despite the fact that at 16 years of age girls' examination performance in certain subjects is better they often come into conflict with boys, risking taunts of being 'academic' rather than sexy. They also need to be released from any form of domestic responsibility. By doing this they are released from one set of contradictions only to encounter a structure of hierarchical control within the social relations of production. However middle class girls do have far more opportunities of choice over career, housing, geographical region and access to further educational resources. It must be pointed out that they are constrained by the notion of a career woman combined with ideal wife and mother. Men have to negotiate a position within family relations but their primary concern is to be in waged work. Fatherhood does not influence career prospects in the same way as motherhood. Men's main concern is to maintain their position within a competitive hierarchy, continually functioning on behalf of capitalist accumulation, whether within state or civil society, or at the place of production. They also benefit from the unpaid labour of their wives within the family.

In the following account we see how the writer when placed in a competitive situation decides that her

career is more important than a future in which she would be expected to reject promotion in favour of accepting domestic responsibility. She refers to the fact that had the job situation been reversed there would have been no question of her boyfriend accepting the situation and her accepting his decision. She challenges this assumption and continues to pursue a career which for the moment will increase her economic and emotional independence.

"It was suggested to me that we lived together in order to have a realistic understanding of our relationship. We both earned more or less the same salary and had enquired about a joint mortgage. We had already sought contraceptive advice and owned our own transport. We were all set to face a different experience in Edinburgh. I was desperately eager to take it as the salary was higher than the one I was receiving and most importantly, because it was a chance to become involved in the career I loved and to realise my long held ambitions. He had known for a long time that I was ambitious, and that promotion might mean living in another part of the country, and in view of this, when I received this opportunity I expected him to be willing to move to Edinburgh with me and continue our relationship as we had planned. However, he didn't want to move so far away and said I should refuse the offer. I saw no reason to do this as I realised that it was unlikely that I'd get the same chance again so I dug my

heels in and said I was going whether or not he came with me. He refused. I wondered what he would have thought had the positions been reversed and I knew that he would have expected me to follow him. I'm not sure how I would have reacted to that either though. At any rate, the incident proved to me that there was not enough love in our relationship to ensure that it would last, not enough to give and take. I'm just glad that it happened before we'd married" (page 124) (5).

We have already discussed the ways in which the curriculum is organised and the ways in which knowledge is related to the dominant culture. But hegemony does not only refer to the content of the curriculum it also refers to the ways in which specific meanings, message systems and social practices are distributed. Gramsci's (1971) concept of ideological hegemony is extremely helpful in as much as it reveals how social reality is seen as self-evident, unchanging or taken for granted. It was expected that the writer of this account would gain access to higher education and a professional career thus ensuring the reproduction of bourgeois class relations. What would not have been expected would have been her choice of career over marriage. By this resistance she would have challenged the existing patriarchal relations of dominance and probably faced some antagonism from both men and women as she put her own economic independence before associating herself with emotional dependency and male control. There are other examples in which other writers play their career

above emotional or economic dependency. (See "Girls Getting It Together", pages 131, 135, 133, 66, 113, 112, 110) but none express quite so clearly the ways in which this writer responded to the contradictory messages contained within the structures of class and gender reproduction. We can see that class and gender relations have their own histories, but these histories do not progress independently. They often merge or become inter-related in complex processes. We have seen in an earlier chapter how the reproduction of class and gender identities are negotiated within contrasting and sometimes antagonistic interactions. In the school and within the family there is a constant 'push' which attempts to associate women with domestic labour accompanied by a specific form of femininity. By this process women are persuaded to accept the 'naturalness' of an often unequal relationship which exists between men and women.

This process is very significant in relation to the ways in which boys and girls experience educational intervention. It is not sufficient to look at the internal processes of educational transmission and try to re-adjust educational provision that has more opportunities for women. When analysing girls' experience of schooling we have to situate our investigation in a much wider context which includes the structure of patriarchal relations.

The writer in the last account seems to have fulfilled the class expectations of school and family. She was directly resisting the imposition of male authority which may have constrained the realisation of career prospects. As we have seen analysed the features of class and male hegemony we must try and show that these relations are negotiated within a context of conflict and we must isolate and examine any examples of writing which show signs of resistance and struggle. We must then ask ourselves whether or not these challenges will dynamically change the existing forces of hegemonic control. We have seen that the notion of hegemonic control implies that ideological imperatives cannot be relied upon to secure a permanent state of dominance. They are constantly vulnerable and under threat from conflicting interests. The ideological forces which support and assist in maintaining hegemonic control have constantly to be re-created and re-defined. Perkins (1978) has shown that "the broad outlines of the ruling ideology are firm and relatively stable, the solutions to particular problems are not pre-given, they do not emerge logically or automatically. They are negotiated within a framework. And this negotiation is itself a source of ideology's effectiveness, of particular contradictions and the location of future problems" (page 137).

In the following account a mother and daughter come together forming an interaction in which both are involved in influencing one another. The daughter

clearly resists any attempt by her mother to suggest that she becomes a traditional wife and mother. The daughter has assimilated and described some of the contradictions that her mother faces and which she wishes to challenge. We can see that the mother's work as a councillor is beginning to challenge certain sets of patriarchal relations, but at the same time she is encouraging her daughter to accept a possible partnership which may reproduce yet another set of relations in which she is subservient. We also see in this piece and the poem which follows a major attack on patriarchal power. The writer may well have been influenced by the position of radical feminists and we get references to lesbian life styles which places the writer outside any sexual encounter with men. The daughter has pinpointed, in illustrating her mother's fear of these positions, that she wants to take a more radical stance. The daughter using her capacity to articulate her position, which has been encouraged by the family, has moved beyond the progressive political position occupied by her mother. I agree with Connell (1982) that "the family is what its members do, a constantly continuing and changing practice" some times one member of the family is able to go beyond the expected behaviour and attitudes and begin to initiate radical strategies. The following written account does show however that the writer relies heavily upon the primary influence of her mother. The writer has to work and act upon her 'own history' and as we can see that is full of contradictions.



"The times when I feel least close to my mother are when I am trying to argue with her over a current issue; I know that since she has an Economics Degree she will know more things like Britain's membership of the EEC but I feel that she is trying to impose her points of view on me.

She will call women of 40 'girls' and this makes me cross because she complains of male councillors doing the same. She says she's not a feminist but then goes on and sets up a women's committee in both the County Council and City Council. I feel she is contradictory - the worst thing is when she keeps telling me that I (and my brother aged 27) should get married. I don't know how she can do all these Women's Issues things and still want her own daughter to get married and have children; I think she's still very out of touch. My mother is still rather afraid of radical feminists and also lesbians, this part of feminism is what she can't cope with and it annoys me. I admire what she's managed to do in her life, but I want to do more" (page 153) (6).

The writer obviously has a strong relationship with her mother, and in some respects we can see that this relationship reflects an alliance in which as women there are possibilities which challenge male hegemony. It should also be noticed that the writer objects to the mother's suggestion that marriage is a destiny for herself and for her brother. In the poem that follows the daughter is attempting to seek her mother's

understanding that she is attracted to women not only as friends but as lovers. The daughter outlines the implications of this choice which seriously challenge the assumption that heterosexual relations are a 'compulsory' set of social and sexual relationships. By writing this poem she is trying to escape from an expected pattern of heterosexual patriarchal relations. She is also indicating to her mother that it will be difficult for both of them to make sense of the daughter's choice to live outside traditional capitalist stance.

"This little girl with well shaped breasts  
She loves the love of women best  
A hum of a day, don't hum it away  
Don't listen to what the neighbours say  
Once more, more plain  
There is no cover  
Your daughter loves a woman, mother  
Your daughter is a woman lover

You wished you'd never told your mother  
That you had a woman lover  
The disappointment and rejection  
Misunderstanding your position  
Feelings that she hid, but failed.  
Your daughter loves a woman  
Your daughter is a woman  
Your daughter  
Someone's daughter, but no longer

Someone's wife  
No longer leading some-else's life  
All the ugly words and phrases  
Screaming from the tabloid pages  
Man-hating sexual deviants  
So hard for mothers to accept  
Material feelings out of step  
With her traditional capitalist stance  
You made your choice - you had no other  
You went and chose your female lover  
Your daughter - still your daughter, mother" (page  
165) (7).

One way of analysing this poem is to suggest that the writer, expressing her sexuality defined as lesbian, is challenging the existing set of patriarchal sexual relations. It could also be seen as a failure of socialisation into a heterosexual adult woman. The writer seems to be asking for some sort of understanding and acceptance from her mother. She is caught up in a contradiction between her desire to be an acceptable daughter but is also struggling against the possibility of heterosexual partnership.

The final lines seem to hold together the idea that she wants to re-negotiate the relationship with her mother, emphasising the fact that as mother and daughter they do not have to rely upon the daughter being defined as a wife and mother.

We can see from this account that there is a serious attempt to challenge the existing patriarchal relations as expressed through the ideology of 'compulsory heterosexuality'. It is possible to distinguish the anxiety that the writer feels as she expresses what it means to pursue a lesbian life style. Arnot (1984) has shown that hegemonic control is never entirely successful implying that there is always a space for intervention. Arnot wishes "to accept as natural the hierarchy of male over female. This attempt to win the consent of boys and girls to particular definitions of gender is limited by the strategies and responses adopted by pupils to the social and ideological structures of school life" (page 18).

In trying to establish the significance of resistance to the imposition of class and gender identities it is important to look at the processes by which ideologies of domesticity, motherhood and compulsory heterosexuality are transmitted through commonsense understandings. This process relies upon shared understandings, what seems obvious, 'normal' and unquestionable, becoming part of popular acceptable knowledge. Clearly the writers in the chapter have questioned their class destination, their place as career women within partnership and their sexual orientation. These positions have been negotiated against other ideological attempts which have been concerned with connecting popularly held assumptions such as the 'place of married women', 'the career women'

or the 'sexually deviant', across a range of agencies such as the media, the church and educational establishments. Specific notions of femininity and female behaviour within the family and within employment are transmitted through a sex-specific education, and also through socialisation within the family into adult male and female social beings. The attempt to win the consent of both male and female to particular definitions of masculinity, and femininity is part of the way in which not only class hegemony is maintained but also male hegemony. By their resistance the writers have also challenged the notion of male supremacy within sexual relations but also within employment and domestic arrangements. It also gives an indication of what can be considered hegemonic at any given time. Continually boys and girls are negotiating alternative forms of masculine and feminine behaviour they are also resisting the imposition of class identities. It is also important to note that these negotiations do not occur equally in all schools. The response of students takes place in a situation in which teachers use a considerable amount of coercion. (It is important to note in terms of my data their written accounts were dependent upon a degree of literacy skills).

The next account shows the degree to which some students are prepared to resist schooling. It is crucial to know that the writer had horrific stories to tell about life with her parents when talking in discussion groups. At

the time of writing she was living with foster-parents and was extremely unhappy. I have no way of establishing whether or not her written account corresponded with her behaviour but the girls treated her with respect and admiration. The following account shows her attitude towards attendance at school.

"It's dry in cold weather. I get free dinners (being in care). The only time that it's not worth going to school is in the summer before the six weeks holiday. We go down the park and sun bathe or go paddling in the kids' pool.

I don't wag school in the winter. I walk the streets while it's raining and by the afternoon I'm starving. The teachers are wicked. They are what they call us ..... animals.

They can punch and kick and swear and bite. When a teacher hits you automatically hit back or I would have done.

A teacher is a thoughtless object and not a person with feeling in teaching hours.

School has its good points, dinner tickets can be flogged and a profit made. Loo rolls can be nicked and sold to the market trader down the road for 5p or 10p a time and exercise books and chalk and board rubbers also make money.

All in all for the last six years you learn to make a profit and survive instead of learning English, Literature or French" (page 50) (18).

The writer obviously shows an extreme resistance to the process of schooling and also to all authority relations. She is involved in schooling but that involvement produces a response in which she is learning new strategies such as stealing and selling and creating a sub-culture in the park. It is difficult to know how she had the ability to resist so much of the school's authority whilst other girls accepted them in various degrees. There is evidence that she was only able to resist the system of constraint at specific points. Her means of opposition relied upon the points at which the authority system were weakest. We have already discussed that in order to reproduce any social order it is essential that the controlling group use a combination of repressive strategies and persuasive tactics.

Before analysing the relationship between schooling and forms of resistance I would like to summarise my position. I have tried to show the ways in which educational establishments and different forms of family life either maintain or challenge attempts to impose hegemonic control on students. I hope that my analysis of hegemony has shown that ideological control is never entirely secure which enables counter hegemonic activity to take place.

As many of the writers in my study belong to ethnic minority groups I have found it impossible not to include within my analysis a discussion which centres around the ways in which white bourgeois hegemony relies upon taken for granted racist assumptions about the black and Asian communities. I have concentrated especially upon assumptions concerned with sexuality, the family, and the notion of educational underachievement.

The girls' writing shows that some of the writers were able to accept both class and gender identities quite easily whilst others were confronted with a range of contradictions. This is especially true when the girls attempted to move across class boundaries in their desire to pursue a career. When it came to questioning the organisation of domestic work as well as pursuing a career the girls from working class backgrounds seemed to face far more confusion than the middle class girls. The girls who attended the grammar school quite easily competed with their male peers for places at university only experiencing conflict when they challenged the social and domestic organisation of family life.

The two examples of resistance to both class and gender definitions came from working class and middle class girls. The girl who resisted school seems to have challenged many authority structures in her life but by so doing has failed to gain access to further educational resources. On the other hand the middle



class girl has negotiated quite a different position but heavily denying any association with men in a sexual or domestic relationship. I hope that these accounts have reflected some of the girls' reactions to attempts to suggestions that class, racial and gender identities are fixed and unchanging. Their responses clearly indicate that hegemonic control is not easily achieved and is always open to re-negotiation and accommodation.

I would like to continue by suggesting that processes of control and processes of resistance are continually and simultaneously interacting and producing differing forms not only of constraint, but also a variety of oppositional strategies. We have already seen that it is within civil society through the agencies of trade unions, religious bodies, political parties, and educational agencies, that struggles over hegemonic control are contested. Hegemonic control of the dominant class or classes together with hegemonic control of the dominant sex is constructed within contesting forces of struggle and coercion. Of course there are many contradictions which occur between antagonistic classes and members of opposite sexes. Many working class men and women face similar contradictions, and women from all classes have to face certain ideological notions which associate them with highly specific definitions of femininity. Within the myriad struggles and conflicts of interest we have to situate the accounts of the girls and try and establish

how significant these challenges can become to white male bourgeois control. The family household is a distinctive agency within civil society and as we have shown women play a specific part in reproducing labour power both economically and biologically. As this labour is unpaid we have to take into consideration the fact that women's struggles will be quite different from the class struggles engaged in by the working class. Women are constantly having to re-negotiate their position within gender relations, as well as challenging class relations.

Schools occupy an usually complicated place within both civil and state apparatus, they embody relations which belong to both civil society and the state. Whilst schools are provided by the state they seem to have all the characteristics of an agency belonging to civil society and are usually run on relatively non-coercive lines. We need to establish how patterns of resistance to class and gender reproduction operate within schools and how seriously they challenge hegemonic control. 'Commonsense' is not always 'good sense' and may contribute to the maintenance of unequal and oppressive relationships. As we have observed within the written accounts patterns of resistance are complex and rarely can be equated with the idea of a two sided contest, whether between capitalist and workers, students and teachers, or between men and women. Contestation is a feature of all schools as Dale (1982) and Apple (1982) have shown. Seen separately, class struggle or issues

around patriarchal power relations are inadequate as particular forms of control generate particular forms of resistance which react back and modify forms of control. It is that movement between forces, which gives space for intervention strategies, that is crucial to our understanding of hegemony.

Opposition to school and to certain constructions of female appropriate behaviour are often centred either around the enforcement of school rules and methods of social and sexual control. Some of the internal contradictions produce sub-cultural responses and these reactions shape the character and dimension of the struggle. As Griffin (1985) has shown these struggles are often concerned with dress, appearance and discipline, and these forms of control are often focused upon young women.

Over the last ten years there have been serious attempts to use the concepts of conflict and resistance as important components which are part of the complex relationship which exists between schooling and the forces of hegemony. Willis (1977), Hebdige (1979), Corrigan (1979), McRobbie (1978) and Fuller (1980) have attempted to integrate Marxist accounts of schooling with detailed ethnographic material in order to show the ways in which students are engaged in practices which both resist and accommodate the imposition of class and gender identities. Despite that fact that Marxist

theoretical accounts of resistance are marked with a variety of problems their greatest strength lies in the ways in which social structures are linked to human activity. Gramsci's notion of hegemony is extremely helpful in that we are able to move beyond the determinism of Althusser and Bowles and Gintis to begin to see a theory of educational practice which has possibilities for transformation. As we have seen from the accounts produced by the girls there is not an easy correspondence between schooling and waged labour nor are patriarchal relationships easily maintained without contestation. In looking at the confusion, contradiction and tensions which are produced in the attempt to reproduce class and gender relations we are able to observe that hegemonic control can be challenged. The reproduction of class and gender relations is never finalised and the process of gaining hegemony has always to confront and accommodate partially realised elements of opposition. I have tried to establish whether or not working class and middle class girls have a distinct cultural 'capital' and whether or not their responses to patriarchal power relations share similar elements. My observations lead me to discover that their responses are not clearly defined within static categories and are best analysed as a 'system of practices' or 'constellations of meaning'. Despite the fact that many of the writers attempted to challenge the class definitions imposed upon them through the family and through schooling the reproduction of class relations seemed to produce more

resistance from the working class girls. Many of the girls were prepared to resist the imposition of forms of femininity which associated them with domesticity. I prefer to look at these responses in the form of a cultural formation isolating the meaning given to such notions as "wife and mother", "career woman", "single working woman", and "lover". By analysing the ways in which these 'systems of meaning' become incorporated into dominant culture it is possible to develop counter hegemonic strategies which may become the basis for both a cultural and feminist pedagogy. Giroux (1983) refers to "a social process that both embodies and reproduces lived antagonistic social relationships".

In looking at the weaknesses of this approach it is crucial to ask questions about the significance of oppositional behaviour. Not all of the responses expressed by the writers are radical in their opposition and some may have more serious implications than others. Subordinated groups often contain elements of both conformist and progressive strategies as my research has shown. It is also unsatisfactory to claim all oppositional activities have equal capacity to effect transformation, this position undermines the whole process upon which hegemonic control depends. As we have seen earlier in the chapter the dynamics of hegemonic ideology do not depend upon a single act of physical or ideological coercion, the process is far more complex and contradictory. In developing counter

hegemonic strategies it is essential to acknowledge the contradictions in an attempt to discard repressive elements and appropriate those forms of resistance which can be most productively utilised. It is all too easy to romanticise all forms of oppositional activity. As Giroux (1983) states "what is being called for here is the need to reformulate the relationship between ideology, culture and hegemony to make clear the ways in which these categories can enhance our understanding of resistance as well as how such concepts can form the theoretical basis for a radical pedagogy that takes human agency seriously".

In the following chapter I hope to explore the ways in which such a pedagogy can be developed in the attempt to formulate a theoretical position which is informed by both feminist and Marxist frameworks. This approach will also incorporate the work of Gramsci, especially using his notion of the role of intellectuals in the creation of counter hegemonic strategies.

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Also quoted in Guardian 21 March 1980.
5. "Girls Getting It Together" (1984) page 124.
6. "Girls Getting It Together" (1984) page 153.
7. "Girls Getting It Together", page 165.  
A note here is necessary. Despite the fact that I have searched through any relevant material I have not located this poem. I do however have a vague remembrance that I've read it before. The writer acknowledges it as her own writing and I am prepared to accept that.
8. "Getting It Together" (1984) page 50.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

My last chapter will be concerned with some of the conclusions that have emerged as I have attempted to isolate some of the tensions which occur when we analyse the relationship between schooling, the family and waged employment. I will especially emphasise some of the contradictions which occur when I try to investigate theories concerned with the imposition of class and gender identities. I have a specific interest in constructing a framework of analysis which deals adequately with both class antagonisms and the social divisions which separate the interests of men from the interests of women across class boundaries.

In order to place my conclusion within an educational and pedagogic context I will explain whether or not a feminist pedagogy is possible. I also hope to clarify the theoretical bases which inform some of the approaches which attempt to change girls' experience of education.

This chapter will also consider the ways in which the construction of masculine identity is both socially and historically problematic for men and boys. The issues of sexual and gender relations cannot be confined entirely to an examination of the ways in which girls experience social life. We have already examined the structure of male control within the classroom, the home and within waged labour but this analysis has been



confined to the effects of these forms of patriarchal control upon the writers. This chapter will now look at the ways in which the construction and reproduction of dominant forms of masculinity affect men in society.

Finally I will show researchers and teachers the significance of writing as an educational and political strategy which can be used to alter both male and female forms of consciousness in such a way as to challenge existing male bourgeois hegemonic relations. These strategies will be discussed in the light of the 1988 Education Reform Act.

Central to my thesis has been an attempt to investigate how class and male hegemony assist in the production of gender consciousness which is constructed within contradictory social relationships. I have shown how some of the girls have accepted bourgeois notions of femininity whilst others from both working class homes and middle class homes have challenged their parents and teachers and envisaged delayed marriage and partnership in order to further their careers.

It must always be remembered that the girls' accounts are anticipated rather than actualities. These particular perceptions are formed during the last year of their schooling and this must always be taken into account. More often than not the girls have been caught in a simultaneous process of both resistance and

accommodation and I hope that I have captured some of the complexity and ambiguity which characterises their responses to pressure from school and families as they are socialised into adulthood. Their accounts are often defensive, defeatist and lack the assurance of those who anticipate a particular status in employment or within a family organisation. In their attempts to form their own structures of power it is possible to see patterns of resistance. This is especially true when they refer to the organisation of the family. It is also true, of course, that some boys experience similar patterns of insecurity during teenage years, but masculinity and femininity operate on such patterns in different ways. I have drawn attention to the ways in which femininity and its association with domesticity prevents some girls ability to fully assert themselves within waged employment. It is often the ways in which girls are identified with a specific role in the household that produces conflict and ambiguity.

Anyon (1983), McRobbie (1978), Fuller (1983), Arnot (1981) and Wolpe (1988) have all referred to the fact that girls do not easily accept any attempts to socialise them into what are considered appropriate gender roles in adulthood. It is obvious by looking at their responses that the girls in my study were attempting to resolve contradictory class and gender messages. There were very distinct differences between the ways in which the girls responded to attempts to introduce a competitive curricula. the ways in which

they achieved self esteem, and the ways in which they accepted the expectations of their teachers and their families. In certain cases I have isolated accounts where the girls faced direct contradictions between sets of class and gender ideologies and have cited the ways in which they responded to these conflicts.

There is evidence in some of the accounts produced by the writers that they would like to increase their sense of self esteem and possibly gain further emotional and financial independence but are constrained by the fact that they anticipate that their male partners may make both emotional and practical demands upon them. Lesbian teenagers, of course, might perceive these relations differently as indicated by the one openly lesbian writer.

When analysing the accounts of much of the material produced by the working class girls in my study it becomes obvious that many of them do not anticipate a career within a hierarchical structure. When they refer to college life, they are usually writing about Youth Training Programmes. Their sense of self worth is often associated with successful mothering and remaining faithful to their partners. In the majority of written accounts the writers do not articulate the realities which they will have to face such as managing on very limited financial resources, living in overcrowded accommodation, possibly being engaged in

home working or child minding and having to cope with the arduous task of child care and domestic responsibility. The struggle for a dignified existence comes into contradiction with attributes associated with femininity such as submissiveness and subordination to the demands of male members of the household.

The white working class writer who aspires to a career in nursing faces a different set of contradictions. The cultural patterns of her family may not have been re-enforced in the school but she has successfully achieved self esteem and confidence by competing with both male and female members of her class. By choosing an occupation which is female dominated the writer has opted for a profession which is closely associated with characteristics which are defined as feminine. She does, however, realise that as a successful nurse she may have to distance herself from the values and expectations of her family. "Fear of not having the home I want, a feeling of inadequacy. Fear of drifting apart from my mother and father" (1).

I have referred to the fact that girls resist attempts to impose socially 'appropriate' or 'approved' ideologies of femininity and class identity. Anyon (1983) writes "the dialectic of accommodation and resistance is manifest in the reactions of women and girls to contradictory situations that face them. Most females neither totally acquiesce in, nor totally eschew, the imperatives of 'femininity' ... Females'

attempts to offset these demands with those of self-esteem (that is to mediate the contradiction between femininity and competence as it is socially defined) exhibit both daily resistance and daily accommodation" (page 23)

Anyon when analysing the concepts of acceptance, accommodation, resistance and rejection relied upon the work of Gramsci (1971). Gramsci suggests that all persons have a 'commonsense' perception of their world. These perceptions may have been passed on through a previous generation, they may be uncritical and unconscious. Commonsense understandings may be ways of trying to organise experiences which are often contradictory. Gramsci stresses that bourgeois hegemonic consent is active rather than passive, negotiated rather than coercively imposed. Simon (1982) clarifying this point explains 'commonsense is the site on which the dominant ideology is constructed, but it is also the site of resistance and challenge to this ideology .... it is negotiated by unequal forces in a complex process through which the subordination and the resistance of the workers are created and recreated" (page 64).

For the purpose of my study it is extremely important to try and understand the socio-ideological processes of cultural production and the ways in which women are able to challenge existing class and gender relations. We have already discussed the ways in which the state rules

more by hegemony than by tyranny. Mary O'Brien (1987) draws our attention to the fact that Marxists analysis fails to incorporate within its framework the form of family relations which characterises the nuclear family. She writes "it is one thing to claim that the nuclear form of family is the specific form developed in capitalist society. There is historical evidence for this. It is quite another to limit the analysis of the private realm to historical change in the economic structure of households and the sexual division of labor" (page 46).

Although O'Brien is aware of the diversity of female class oppression, she believes that Gramsci's notion of hegemonic control is particularly helpful to our understanding of women's oppression, she writes "it is a mode of domination which emerges from the dialectics of reproductive process as patriarchal hegemony, culturally constructed, ideologically sophisticated and intent on securing consent to the theory and practice of male supremacy" (page 48)

In terms of everyday lives of women it is essential to try and examine how consensual working class consciousness develops and why women and girls consent to the ideology and practice of patriarchy. McRobbie (1978) and Griffin (1985) have isolated the ways in which patriarchal relations intervened in the decision girls made about their futures within the family and waged labour.

Many of the writers in my study were members of ethnic minority communities, the majority coming from India or Bangladesh. It is clear from their writings that some of these girls see their place in the family in a specific way. It is also evident that their educational experiences are also shaped by economic, political and patriarchal factors. Wilson (1978), Bryan et al (1985), Parmar (1982) and Brah and Minhas (1985) have also highlighted the ways in which racist assumptions about stereotypical images of black women, black sexuality and the structure of family life have affected the educational experiences of black women. But it is not only racism or male power relations that affect black women, it is also crucial to analyse the structure of black employment, state policies on housing, health and education, Immigration Law and Nationality Acts and the existence of institutionalised racism. When we consider some of the ways in which we can organise alternative structures and ways of challenging existing ideologies concerned with creating stereotypes of black female experience it would be expedient to listen to words of Amos and Parmar (1984) "we cannot simply prioritize one aspect of our oppression to the exclusion of others, as the realities of our day-to-day lives make it imperative for us to consider the simultaneous nature of our oppression and exploitation. Only a synthesis of race, gender and sexuality can lead us forward as these form the matrix of black women's lives" (pages 17-18).

It is essential to try to understand why some girls accept their class associations whilst others not only reject class relations but also resist constructions of femininity which are dependent upon male approval. When discussing the notion of hegemony we have noted that hegemonic control is never securely established.

This study shows how family structure differs across class boundaries and ethnic groups. It shows the significance of the family household as a site where class, gender and cultural identities are negotiated. It also shows the importance of gender relations within family structures, especially the relationships between brothers and sisters. (Girls Getting It Together) (1984) (2).

Now to return to the ways in which women actively respond to attempts at shaping their future lives in relation to inferior status within waged work and a double burden of labour within the home. Connell (1983) when referring to the reproduction of the relations between different classes suggests that the relation of social subordination between working class and ruling class is best maintained by preventing the mobilisation of the subordinate class. He states that class struggle does not occur in a unified process but in a fragmented and disordered way. In this way the maintenance of capitalist domination is secured by preventing a well defined socially and politically active opposition. Connell (1983) writes "the real



world of class relations, then, is a world where some kind of possibilities are constantly being opened up, others closed down; where some kinds of practice lead into unexpected traps, and others to unexpected transformation" (page 157).

Rather than use Gramsci's notion of hegemony as a 'pattern of domination' I prefer to use this concept as a means of analysing a situation and indicating the ways in which possible strategies can intervene and alter women's experience within schooling, employment and within family life. This may mean that our discussion moves away from the relationship between schooling and the economy and concentrates more centrally upon patriarchal power relations.

By using the notion of male hegemony I refer to a situation in which male members of society have established a form of control over female members of society. This means that male definitions of social relations prevail and definitions of common purpose and commonsense understandings are controlled by white, male, middle-class groups. This situation is able to be maintained as long as competing counter hegemonic alternatives do not become organised and challenge the dominant group. Male power is often sustained by commonsense understandings which produce a consensus of ideas. This is especially significant when we approach the construction of gender identities. Forms of

masculinity and femininity present themselves as realities rather than being shaped by specific historical and social experiences. This presents the teacher with enormous problems as he or she attempts to initiate change. Questions which surround the issue of gender identity come into conflict with widely acknowledged and acceptable forms of femininity and masculinity. It may be that our gender is one of the most significant ways in which we experience the social world. It is our mental environment, we come to recognise maleness and femaleness in every moment of our consciousness.

Gramsci's work shows us that no ideological form can be seen as a direct product of a specific class, or for that matter, gender. Ideologies are formed from diverse and sometimes conflicting elements. They are not fixed. This gives hope to the radical teacher as he or she is able to understand ideological practices as a result of complex forms of negotiation between a variety of groups which include class formation, members of ethnic groups and male and female members. Hegemony is never totally achieved. It can be challenged in a variety of ways.

#### Implications of the 1988 Education Reform Act

This can be seen in recent attempts to re-structure the education system. The Tories have resolved any potential conflict from parents and teachers by

restructuring education and thus gaining a renewed hegemonic settlement and consent to different but more powerful control over the educational process. Girls are affected by the attempt to re-establishment a new consensus. Whilst being offered equal access to a National Curriculum they are also having to face a situation in which femininity is also associated with a central place within the constraints of domestic life. Section 28 of the Local Government Act makes it impossible for teachers to discuss issues of sexuality which involve choices about homosexual or lesbian lifestyles.

The implications of the 1988 Education Reform Act will seriously affect students who come from the inner city, ethnic minority groups and students who have special educational needs. The Right, in their attempt to restructure the education system, have used the Reform Act to erode local control of educational establishments. LEA control of schools will be severely limited as local financial management of schools will be in the hands of governing bodies administered through the head teacher. Schools will be encouraged to develop systems of independent survival and sponsorship. Together with open enrolment and local financial management, schools will become similar to public limited companies. They will operate upon the principles of free market economy. There will be no democratic local government accountability,

especially for those establishments which choose to opt out. Their funding will be supported through direct grant from central government.

Under local education authority control it is possible to ensure that schools in poorer areas are allocated additional resources according to social and economic need. LEAs are responsible for such services as home tuition, peripatetic and support services. With the implementation of the Reform Bill LEAs will have to reduce these services which will be centrally held.

The main thrust of Right Wing Tory education policy is to severely curtail local government control of schools. Tory policy wishes to deflect attention away from economic crises and focus upon the 'failure' of teachers and attack socialist notions of equal access to educational resources. As Simon (1988) has indicated "significantly the state, instead of working through and with other social organisations (specifically local authorities and teachers' organisations) is now very clearly seeking a more direct and unitary system of control than has ever been thought polite - or even politically possible - in the past" (page 43).

In order to support and maintain the central objectives of the Reform Bill Baker has introduced a National Curriculum together with regular testing of students at 7, 11, 13 and 16 years of age.

In this way teachers will be shackled to a very rigidly constructed curriculum which is organised around specific subject areas.

The bulk of the testing will be conducted by norm-referenced tests which is a hierarchical ordering of skills. The type of testing indicates how individual students perform in relation to one another. The Reform Act proposes that individual schools make public the results of national tests. Not only will it be possible to see differences between individual children, + classes of children but it will be possible to see how differences occur between schools, neighbourhoods and across the country. This form of testing takes no account of students whose mother tongue is not English, it does not account for individual rates of learning, nor does it account for the learning context.

Thatcherism is intent on a central objective which is to erode local government control, to pursue educational policies which are socially divisive and to ensure that egalitarian notions of equal access to educational resources are severely constrained. The imposition of a National Curriculum, accompanied by published results, will ensure that Thatcherite priorities are reproduced and maintained.

These factors obviously have important implications for my study which I will refer to later in the chapter.

When discussing any attempt to transform schooling it seems extremely difficult to convey notions of alternative and preferable forms of educational practice. Many working class men and women, racial groups, and large groups of women have become disenchanted with the educational system. In order for women to gain greater control of their lives it is essential for them to identify those relations and everyday practices which constrain and hinder their progress. It is clearly obvious that teachers can assist women and girls to recognise their own interests and to examine the ways in which they can lead more satisfying lives. I would suggest that writing is one form of articulating those issues.

The practical implications of using  
"writing" as a strategy

Writing in the tradition of Gramsci (1971), Giroux (1983) and Freire (1970, 1973, 1985, 1987), Foucault (1980a), James Donald (1982) shows us that critical literacy is an important construct which can help in the transformation of social and economic forces. Donald (1982) writes "each time that in one way or another, the question of language comes to the fore, that signifies that a series of other problems is about to emerge, the formation and enlarging of the ruling class, the necessity to establish more 'intimate' and sure relations between the ruling groups and the national popular masses, that is, the reorganisation of cultural

hegemony", All these writers have been concerned with the politicization of literacy suggesting that the ideological construct of functional literacy is less to do with the task of teaching people how to read and write but has more to do with producing and legitimating oppressive and exploitative social relations. In times of economic crisis the state looks closely at the function of the school, employers insist that the curriculum becomes finely attuned to the needs of the job market and literacy is conceived as "computer literacy". Few radical teachers have been able to insist that a general and expressive arts education is the basis for a critical literacy. Giroux (1987) has suggested that "Reagan economics" has reduced the capacity for educationalists to develop a "cultural politics of literacy" which ensures that literacy develops an alternative discourse which gives the students a critical reading of how ideology, culture, and power function within capitalism. In a wider sense 'literacy' can be seen as a form of social control marginalising the experience of certain groups within society. In Freire's conceptual frame-work a critical pedagogy enables students and teachers to "read the work and the world".

Writing together as teachers and as women may help to reclaim the authorship of our own lives. We have already examined the relationship between knowledge and power. In order to develop a radical critical pedagogy

it is crucial to examine the social and cultural practices which embody particular interests and relations of power. I hope that women writers are able "to develop pedagogical practices in which in the battle to make sense of one's life reaffirms and furthers the need for teachers and students to recover their own voice so that they can re-tell their own histories and in so doing check and criticize the history (they) are told against the one (they) have lived" (page 108)

By using the strategy of writing (which was not to be censored) followed by critical discussion and dispersal of the writings through female networks, I feel that as students and teachers we moved beyond retelling and comparing stories. It was possible to examine the writings and look at the principles which structured their particular form. Hopefully such an examination makes one's self part of any analysis of class, race or gender dynamics. Throughout the study I have attempted to show that the social, cultural, political and economic dimensions of everyday life are the primary categories for understanding contemporary schooling. Within each educational establishment there are a variety of struggles taking place. As with the girls in my study there are varying degrees of accommodation, challenge and resistance. Writing which is produced outside the constraints imposed by "functional literacy" can provide an important focus for understanding both political and ideological interests which are occurring within educational encounters. By the use of the



strategies of writing, talking and debate it has been possible to see what counts as legitimate knowledge for the female writers. This type of discourse has enabled the writers to present their own stories. Teachers often think of bodies of knowledge as their own property. Knowledge is produced in the process of interaction either with the teacher or other students. Our attempts at writing together as teacher and writers was an attempt to overcome a one sided interaction in which the teacher was privileged. By the use of writing strategies I hoped that we could value our work as female writers. In this type of learning the 'knowledge' itself becomes critical, engaged, personal and social. As Simon (1987) has written developing the notion of critical pedagogy ... "teaching and learning must be linked to the goal of educating students to take risks, to struggle with on going relations of power, to critically appropriate forms of knowledge that exist outside of their immediate experience, and to envisage versions of a world which (in the Blochian sense) is "not yet" - in order to be able to alter the grounds on which life is lived" (pages 11-12).

Women have constantly been denied a significant place within main and 'male' stream literacy culture. According to Lynne Spender (1983) six per cent of all books reviewed are written by women. Many of the writers who contributed to "In Other Words: writing as a feminist" (1987) had ambiguities about being a 'real'

writer. They often expressed a concern that working class or black women did not have the correct credentials to call themselves writers. As a researcher, a teacher and a working class woman I took courage from Tillie Olsen (1980) who suggests "the product can't be separated from the conditions of its production. This is part of the most basic feminist lesson - that the personal is political; we don't leave ourselves out of the picture when we start writing and what we produce reflects the constraints under which we live as women: constraints of illiteracy, domestic responsibility, censorship and poverty, as well as lack of professional recognition".

All too often discussions which focus on functional literacy, link literacy to popular forms of liberal or conservative discourse. Literacy is tied to a narrowly defined set of skills which are related to economic interests, or to an ideology which is designed to initiate the poor, the under privileged, marginalised groups into the logic of a unitary dominant culture.

I hope that my work with groups of girls who may see themselves as writers is part of a radical pedagogy which attempts to name and transform ideological, economic, social and patriarchal conditions which do not personally function to their advantage.

## The practice of feminist teaching

Connell (1983) has suggested that some of our educational and political intervention "may lead us into unexpected traps" and others bring unexpected transformations. Deem (1986) has warned against a polarisation of initiatives which are rooted in distinctly different analyses such as the radical feminist position and the more literally constituted approaches of the 'equal opportunities' approach. Deem points out that "women must infiltrate the formal political and policy making process as well as the informal, if real changes are to occur" (page 10).

We must therefore ask ourselves what we consider to be effective feminist strategies. We must be clear about the ways in which we are defining unequal social relations as this will have implications for both teachers and policy makers. Byrne (1983) refers to the notion of equality of access or equality of resources to students across sex, race, rural and urban categories. She makes demands upon the state to ensure that all students have access to a balanced core curriculum which includes parenting, home economics, mathematics and design courses. She writes "the biggest hindrance in my view to the achievement of sex equality, regional and rural equality and racial equality, is the persistent refusal of government, central and local alike to take any accountable responsibility whatever for ensuring the achievement of a national plan of education; for a

common core to which every child has a right and for which every educator has a duty to provide" (page 188).

The rationale behind the 'equality of opportunity' approach depends upon providing more equal access to educational resources. By re-organising the curriculum, challenging sex-stereotyping in text-books, adjusting registers, looking at sexually differentiated practices and forms of control schools have attempted to remove obstacles that prevent women gaining qualifications, having opportunities to re-train, running assertiveness training courses and generally attempting to provide women with the abilities, skills and resources which will enable them to compete with men. Within this approach we can see the insistence upon 'access to provision' as being of crucial significance in changing girls' experience of education.

Tessa Blackstone (1985) expresses some of the strategies which characterise this approach "the important task is to widen girls' horizons about what opportunities are available to them in relation to the qualifications they already have and those which they have the potential to achieve. This requires both general improvements in careers counselling and specific initiatives to encourage girls to consider occupations which have traditionally been dominated by men ... It is through in-service training that we are most likely to make the teaching profession aware of where we need to intervene to create equal opportunities for girls" (xv Preface).

One of the main problems with the liberal approach of Blackstone and Byrne is a failure to fully examine why the inequalities came to exist in the first place.

It is not only important that girls obtain equal access to educational provision it is just as significant that girls achieve equal outcomes as those experienced by boys. This must involve some discussion about child care and domestic labour.

Adams (1985) suggests that there may be resistance from both men and women teachers who interpret equality of opportunity in a much wider context. Educational opportunities may include special provision for slow learning students and students who have experienced racist treatment which has hindered their access to educational provision. Mullard (1982) for instance, referring to the notion of equality of opportunity with specific concern for racial equality sees some notions of equality as a means of social control. He suggests that the degree of equal opportunity afforded to any group will closely correlate with that group's acceptance of the dominant value and belief system. He writes "given the racial dimension of the structural inequality that exists in our society, equal opportunity in practice means equal opportunity only for persons whose ideas and values conform to those of the dominant white middle class culture".

The radical feminist commenting upon definitions of equal access to educational resources with specific concern for women and girls would suggest that not only are females competing for access to explicitly middle class and 'white' social and educational objectives, they are also facing an organisation of knowledge which is dominated by male language and so called masculine forms of thinking. By competing in this process it may mean that female cultural forms have to be suppressed.

The equal rights tradition centres around equal access for men and women not only to all types of educational provision but also to job opportunities, welfare benefits and legal status. But as Foster (1985)† Yates (1985) have pointed out access to educational provision does not improve such positive attributes as assertiveness, and competitiveness. These characteristics are necessary for women to overcome earlier socialisation which encourages forms of femininity which emphasise gentility and passivity. Women may be encouraged to be dependent upon men and this dependency may well affect their subject choices despite the fact that they have access to a core curriculum. Some feminists are cynical about the possibility of educational change for women unless education tackles the problem of male economic and political power. They suggest that until we expose the relationship between female education, patriarchal relations and the structure of family life it will not

be possible to achieve sex equality.

Deem (1986) has indicated "the difference between these approaches is analytically distinct. It is a mistake to put these approaches in opposition".

I have found myself in the position of these writers realising that the writing groups have been seen "as both" radical and liberally constructed initiatives and can be similarly viewed theoretically and philosophically. Radical in the sense that the groups were organised on the basis of single sex grouping. This was an attempt to provide a space which was positive and affirmative for girls. In the groups it was possible for the writers to escape any type of sexual or racial harassment. Perhaps Dale Spender (1983) writes most clearly about the qualitative differences between male and female power relations. This points to the advantages of why it is important for girls to organise within 'girls only' groups.

She writes "males can alter the power configuration of society so that it is no longer necessary for them to be seen as the superior sex, no longer mandatory for them to be in control. Then the whole process of conditioning males for positions of power (with its consequent divorce from nurture, support, co-operation) would be so inappropriate and dysfunctional that it is almost inevitable that a new male (and a new female)

role would emerge. Such a choice is not open to women and this is one of the fundamental assertions of feminism. Power is not in the hands of women; we do not control the social agencies and we cannot just choose to change the social organisation" (page 99).

Some examples of feminist interventions challenge the assertion that mixed schools are even safe places for girls to be educated and prepared for adulthood. They interpret the concept of positive discrimination in terms of how girls can organise independently from men in order to resist male attempts to establish control. Cornbleet and Libovitch (1983) when commentating upon the DASI (Developing Anti-Sexist Innovation) (7) Project included in their recommendations single sex groupings for certain subjects. Their reasoning centred around the possibility that girls could work together in order to develop awareness and confidence and be in a position to support one another against male domination. (Jones 1985). By positively discriminating in this way girls are not expected to 'catch up' in the sense of accommodating, as Spender has suggested, male dominated forms of knowledge. In single sex groupings it may be possible to discuss how girls consent to a series of class and gender relations which do not work in their own interests. With the assistance of encouraging female teachers such groups may be able to demythologise some of the commonly accepted misconceptions about female inferiority, the objectification of sexual relationships and female dependency. Suleiman and



Suleiman (1985) and Jones (1985) have all shown, from evidence given by girls, that mixed comprehensive schools can be places where boys continually use sexuality to harass and humiliate girls. This, of course, does not mean that some boys do not become victims of male violence themselves. Susan Suleiman, commenting upon the experience of her daughter who was harassed by supporters of the National Front. Her daughter writes "because once it 'got round' that I was half Turkish, and therefore unusual they started to dislike me ... sometimes they would attack me, and every day, several times a day, boys used to punch me".

In the third year her daughter was placed in "a girls only grouping" which relieved exposure to violent and racist male behaviour and assisted her to leave school with a good selection of 'O' level GCE results.

It is always difficult to estimate just how much girls have gained from single-sex grouping, as changes in attitude and an increase in confidence and self esteem cannot be measured as easily as an increase in number of girls gaining Physics 'A' level passes. Ord and Quigley (1985) comment on the success of single-sex grouping write "girls are less invisible than they used to be. Tutors comment on girls increasing assertiveness and expressed concern about sexist graffiti or verbal abuse from boys" (page 118).

The girls in my study were enabled to discuss and write about areas of their lives which would have been impossible had boys been present.

It is also very important to add that "girls only writing groups" were only possible in most of the educational establishments because gender issues and equality of opportunity initiatives were seen as crucial in mainstream debates about the curriculum. Key members of staff in all the establishments were supportive of the groups and I emphasised the importance of these groups as good educational practice. Ord and Quigley (1985) have stressed these points. They write "we were also determined that in a school which paid lip service to good education equaling anti-sexist education, there should be full staff involvement. Anti-sexism was not to be a hived-off issue for a few half crazed enthusiasts to tackle; it was and is the responsibility of good educationists" (page 112).

Deem (1986) has also indicated that in order to legitimate a particular educational intervention, it is crucial that it has the support of not only an LEA equal opportunities policy and possibly an adviser with responsibility for issues concerned with girls' education. It is also important to secure the consent of participating teachers.

Despite the fact that initiatives concerned with gender inequality are thin on the ground, I would suggest that in order to facilitate any lasting change egalitarians, politicians, head teachers and feminists must move gender issues into the mainstream discussion of curriculum planning and school organisation. As we have seen from our analysis of the notion of positive discrimination the theoretical bases for the approaches differ considerably although the outcomes, as advantages for girls, may be similar.

#### Girls Getting It Together

My own research has been concerned with an investigation into female consciousness. I have been particularly interested in the relationship between processes of schooling, the organisation of family life and the structure of female waged labour. Deem (1986) has referred to the fact that "all social change of more than the most piecemeal and trivial kinds needs the consent of those likely to be affected".

Much of my research has been an investigation into how girls and women consent to both class and gender relations which often do not act in their own interest.

The girls do exhibit in their writing points of resistance to both class and patriarchal attempts to impose hegemonic control. These fissures of resistance may be expanded so that we can see ways in which

alternative forms of femininity may be negotiated. It may be at this point that both patriarchal and class hegemony is threatened and new transformations emerge.

In previous chapters in this thesis it has been possible to see how the writers attempted to resolve contradictory class and gender messages. Their writing has shown that as the girls anticipate adulthood employment, motherhood and partnership they face many contradictions.

We have already referred to the fact that girls are not necessarily hindered by lack of academic qualifications. The writers in my study do reveal that it may be extremely difficult to combine a successful career with the demands of domestic labour. (Girls Getting It Together (1984) (pages 118, 66, 18)) (8). Some writers are particularly ambivalent about what it will mean to combine domestic labour motherhood and waged work. There are many instances where girls who do not anticipate gaining qualifications fully accept their limited role within family life. They often refer to the possibilities of boredom and frustration but like other writers (McRobbie (1978), Griffin (1985)) have pointed out the main reason for getting married is because they see no alternative. Lees (1986) has remarked that the girls in her study "took for granted that they would get married, yet when you look at the various kinds of comments they make, what is portrayed is not so much a romantic as a realistic view of the

grimmer aspects of women's lot in marriage" (pages 86-87).

What is most significant in my study is the fact that the girls who attended the selective girls' grammar school, although they included marriage as part of adulthood were much more inclined to delay or even attempt to negotiate different forms of household arrangements. Some actively resisted the prioritisation of marriage over gaining a professional qualification. It must always be remembered that the writings represented not actualities but thoughts about the future.

Some of the decisions which were discussed by the writers were greatly influenced by their own particular class and cultural experience of family life. The middle class girls, who were all white, had far more choice over career and social mobility. Many of the girls showed how they were exposed to the contradiction between gaining esteem as a waged employee but also having to service the male members of the household.

It is perhaps at this point that the girls' writings are most helpful. They show a variety of responses to the imposition of a white male defined narrow curriculum the imposition of unequal and unjust relations within the family and the imposition of waged labour which is underpaid, unequally segmented and has poor conditions

and services. The question of giving consent to these sets of relations broadens from the public domain into the private domain where two significant sets of relations emerge. We see that the practice of patriarchy will have enormous implications for the future of these writers. School becomes a rehearsal for the separation of private and public lives. The family re-enforces those divisions and decisions to have children become part of male control of reproduction which limit access to waged employment, further education. Motherhood is also accompanied by extended hours of domestic labour. Account after account, produced by the girls, indicated a variety of responses to the ways in which they anticipated waged and domestic labour. It seems that any critical pedagogy must begin with an examination of the practice of patriarchy. Current attempts to centralise women within conventional marriage, the insistence of 'good' unpaid mothering, and the centrality of "computer literacy" and a national curriculum, are not simply responses to economic crises they are also intricately bound up with the operation of patriarchy.

I believe that by using writing, discussion and debate it is possible to develop a critique which begins to unmask the lies, myths and distortions which work towards the maintenance of current class, racial and male hegemony.

This task will not be easy, especially when students will be attempting to reach specific targets at a particular age. When a National Curriculum is introduced it may not be possible to develop alternative curricula which are constructed around integrated studies.

The form of writing which is central to my thesis concerns an approach which includes not only expertise from the English Department but relies upon sociological and historical perspectives. It would also be of enormous assistance to teachers involved in active tutorial work and pastoral concerns.

National testing will inevitably determine curriculum objectives which may be narrowly defined and closely associated with norm referenced tests. My form of writing would then be considered rather dangerous as the students are encouraged to develop a critical awareness of not only their class position but also male power relations and the maintenance of structural racism. The Education Reform Act is an exercise in social control, selection of hierarchical privilege and grading students according to economic status. The content of the curriculum will be severely regulated in order to suppress any alternative accounts of social activity which attack capitalist values and the operation of market forces.

My thesis emphasises the use of writing as a tool of self analysis. The centre of interest moves outside the classroom. It has become obvious in the development of this thesis that if we are to gain insights into the ways in which female consciousness is formed we must look at the social relations of family life and the structure of paid employment. Any attempt to examine girls' experience of education cannot fail to examine the ways in which ideological and material conditions are shaped outside schools. These conditions form the terrain not only of domination but also of struggle. It is the function of the feminist teacher to link what we call the language of critique with the language of possibility.

The girls' writings indicated that they wanted to write about issues beyond mothering, marriage and waged employment. They wrote about trade union activity, life with their female friends, and imagined countries which they had never visited. One of the implications of this for the feminist teacher is the possibility of using these accounts to discuss with the students areas of popular culture, mass media, trade union activity, abortion, third world issues, and different forms of political and economic systems. Writing provides a platform for women and girls to construct their own voices within a wider range of public and educational voices. By this process it is possible to highlight certain contradictions and insights and to analyse how they make sense of their worlds.



I hope that my thesis has begun to show that class relations are intricately structured by gender relations and that not only are women controlled by the economic interests of the ruling class but they are also enmeshed in patriarchal relations. I have been particularly interested in the ways in which the girls have actively responded to material and ideological forces which have attempted to impose bourgeois definitions of femininity. Any feminist intervention would seek to show that different forms of family arrangement are structured by economic, historical, cultural and religious factors. The most significant aspects of such an intervention would be an insistence that bourgeois family life is not necessarily to be perceived as superior. Many of the girls in my study did not easily identify with either bourgeois definitions of femininity or an inferior position within male/female relations. A feminist strategy of intervention may assist the girls to articulate some of the feelings of ambivalence and conflict that face those who do not necessarily wish to seek employment which is an extension of domestic or service work.

#### The shaping of consent

Gramsci's notion of hegemony functions in such a way that consciousness of our position and our identity affects the ways in which we hold specific assumptions, beliefs and values. It is of crucial significance that

we understand how those ideas govern our actions and our commitment. Our practices and our activity sustains and reproduces the structural power relations of our families and our schools. Gramsci has repeatedly referred to the fact that domination is not achieved by coercion or economic domination alone. Teachers, intellectuals, journalists, religious leaders and politicians help to create a situation in which consent is obtained to both class and gender relations. When attempting to form a feminist pedagogical practice and thereby organise a challenge to existing hegemony, it is essential to try and establish how women come to accept certain definitions of themselves. We need to know how women accept or reject ideologies of femininity which associate them with an over-identification with domesticity and child care. The power of ideology lies in its capacity to make specific social relations appear natural, normal and universal.

A worthwhile feminist pedagogy must address the structure of authority and control which may emphasise different aspects of male and female authority. By ensuring that the writers groups in each school and youth group were 'girls only' groups and emphasising, in their writing, the experience of being a woman in their household and their expectations as female adults, I hope that I was able to reveal patterns of class and patriarchal control. Whilst in some ways it was easier to isolate either class or patriarchal relations, it is much more difficult to establish how class, race and

gender relations are structured. A feminist teacher must try and establish how class domination is supported not only by the gaining of consent to unequal class relations but is also compounded by women's assent to definitions of femininity which are associated with male approval.

I hope that I did not assume that the Asian girls in my study would be necessarily caught in a 'cultural trap' or that marriage arrangements were automatically a problem. Parmar (1981) has already shown the racism involved in encouraging Asian girls to reject some of the cultural and familial patterns which characterise their particular domestic organisation. When sharing my research findings with black feminists it has been suggested to me that the girls would have written different accounts if the facilitator had been black. I think this has implications for white feminists working with black girls and is an area that should be on the agenda when discussing anti-sexist and anti-racist strategies.

It would be impossible, in my attempt to analyse the formation of a feminist pedagogy, not to include some reference to the ways in which politicians and policy makers have been involved in the re-negotiation of class and male hegemonic relations.

Whilst the Race Relations Act concentrated heavily on individual acts of discrimination emphasising the negative aspects of racial oppression, the Sex Discrimination Act indicated a move towards identifying and challenging the discriminatory practices and the organisational structures which characterised specific institutional bodies. The concept of equality of opportunity was used in post war sociology to refer to analyses of social class difference. With the civil rights movement (and other liberation movements) together with the feminist movement the issues of rights for blacks, women, gay and lesbian persons and the disabled became part of a broad demand on the state to provide access to resources which had previously been denied.

Anti-discrimination legislation (Sex Discrimination Act 1975; Race Relations Act 1976) have assisted and supported the introduction of equality of opportunity debates. But as Jeffcoate (1985), and Rendel (1985) have pointed out there are considerable problems when we rely upon legislation to radically change consensus on issues of race and gender inequality.

If we are considering the implementation of positive policy initiatives we must look not at the 'paper policy' but at the outcome as it affects girls education, their place in the family and the sort of job or career that is available.

It is impossible to untangle the relative value of such a variety of pressure groups which have united in their attempt to tackle the question of equality of opportunities for women. The Sex Discrimination Act is supported by the Equal Opportunities Commission which can assist members of the public to challenge sexist practices and examples of sexual discrimination at the place of employment or within an educational establishment. The weight and financial support of the Schools Council was directed towards a two year project (Schools Council Sex Differentiation Project (1981-3)) in which a variety of school processes and practices were evaluated in terms of sex differentials. There have also been a number of attempts to encourage more girls to opt for science subjects (EOC Women into Science and Engineering Year (1984); "Girls and Science" HM Inspectorate (1980); "Girls Into Science and Technology (1984)).

Rosemary Deem (1981) shows how educational policy which relates to women in post-war Britain is formed within a matrix of labour market requirements and ideologies of motherhood and family responsibility. There was more attention paid to women's education and more opportunities created for training in a time of full employment. Due to demographic changes in the population mature women will once again become sought after employees.

Deem (1986) in another significant article, argues that there is a place within politics for the feminist to be involved in gender equality issues. These issues can then become part of the agenda of local party politics. By being elected as a local candidate there will be possibilities to influence or make decisions about local education authority policy. If appointed as a school governor it may be possible to become part of a selection process when appointing new staff, organisational aspects of the school can be examined and issues of gender equality can be placed on the agenda for discussion.

A feminist pedagogy must be concerned with attempting to provoke a counter-hegemonic challenge to existing relations of class and male hegemony. In other words by using a variety of strategies as detailed above, it may be possible to provoke a crisis in hegemony. As teachers, politicians, administrators, and policy makers we are involved in transmitting ideological messages and as we have already noted hegemonic control is never entirely secure. Counter hegemonic activity at a variety of levels, although not always successful, is always significant, especially if it can create a political and ideological environment in which educational outcomes for girls are transformed.

A feminist pedagogy must attack the organisation of many different social forces and by its activity not only unmask women's 'real relation' to economic and

patriarchal power structures, it must also reveal the unequal relations of working class men and women to the dominant economic class, and also expose the ways in which capitalist society depends upon institutionalised racism. We perceive the social world through ideological categories and definitions of social reality. Apple (1979) has stated that there are two requirements for ideological hegemony. We need an acceptance of categories and definitions which saturate our everyday consciousness but we also need intellectuals who give legitimacy to those categories and ensure that they appear acceptable and uncontested.

It is the task of the feminist teacher, in as many ways as possible to make problematic any form of consciousness or form of practice or procedure that constrains women's attempts to attain financial cultural and emotional independence.

#### Future Directions: Some concluding remarks

My concluding remarks will centre around the implications of my thesis on the direction of future research areas.

This thesis has emphasised the connections between schooling, family life and female waged labour. It has used writing as a means of data collection. It has attempted to utilise the work of Antonio Gramsci in

order to provide a framework within which it is possible to formulate feminist initiatives which will determine the long term future of girls within the education system.

These emphases have marginalised a serious discussion concerned with sexuality and the sexual relations of power. Much of this thesis has been concerned with the ways in which girls and women experience relations of power within family life within the organisation of educational establishments and within the structure of waged labour. We have seen how the private world of personal relationships has been separated from the public world of waged labour.

I have not, however, made an attempt to investigate how men experience these relations. It is important to see how male members of society experience competition, aggressiveness and domination. The private world of personal vulnerability as experienced by men has not been an issue for feminist inquiry.

Feminists have not been able to examine the fact that the construction of masculinity is socially and historically problematic. Feminism has raised the issue of sexual power relations and made demands upon men to take more responsibility for domestic work and child care. Some women have also challenged men to re-examine the structure of their emotional life. Seidler (1985) has pointed out "the power men carry in the



structure of capitalist society is at a considerable cost in terms of our own emotional capacities, understandings and desires".

It seems appropriate, as a feminist, to suggest that teachers should examine how constructs of male identity are going to affect boys as they enter manhood (Askew and Ross 1988). There seems to be an urgency and insistence upon the transition between schooling and the public arena of male waged labour. Whilst feminists have made attempts to analyse how girls respond to the contradictions between domestic life and waged labour, there has been no attempt to understand how boys are to become husbands, fathers or partners. Education is not the only area where boys have used objectivity and impartiality as criteria of success but these characteristics do not transfer easily to the organisation of family life. Male, white, middle class definitions of masculinity often rely upon rationality and superiority. These men assert power over women, children, other men and members of different racial groups. Schooling plays an important part in culturally reproducing a specific form of masculinity and therefore it is important for teachers to examine their role in that process.

Feminist research has highlighted the ways in which the sexual division of labour both at home and at work affects men and women differently. It has shown how

sexism and racism adversely affects girls within most areas of their lives and most importantly feminism has attempted to investigate the inter play between gender relations, class relations and racism. An analysis of the construction of masculinity needs to be related to these issues. The analysis must be formulated in such a ways as to avoid dangerous areas where patriarchal and class forces appropriate the positive benefits achieved by feminist initiatives.

Rogers (1988) has shown how 'men only' institutions such as pubs, clubs, sports clubs together with exclusive male clubs, public schools and the clergy of the Church of England, provide escape routes for men from women and children. These men only institutions protect men from personal involvement not only with their children but with their partners. Stoller (1975) has suggested that masculinity is constructed as a defensive structure. Separateness from the mother emphasises difference and difference must be fortified and defended in the process of becoming masculine.

New questions arise for feminists as we ask how boys learn to be male (Askew and Ross 1988). Just as girls are beginning to realise that tension and power must be recognised as processes within gender relations, men must also realise the ways in which they subordinate other men and other racial groups. Seidler (1980) has commented upon the ways in which masculinity is constantly under threat.

"As boys we have to be constantly on the alert to either confront or avoid physical violence. We have to be ready to defend ourselves. We are constantly on our guard. Masculinity is never something we can feel at ease with. It is also something we have to be ready to prove and defend" (page 9) :

So boys enter manhood wary of one another, having already competed with one another on the football field and by shows of academic and physical superiority. In adulthood most men fight for status over sexual prowess, money, mechanical skills or employment status. Their worst fear is humiliation before other males or the violence of other men. In order to maintain a masculine identity women become objectified as symbols of male success or used as mediators or refuges. In each of these roles women are dominated by men in ways that derive directly from men's struggle with each other.

In order to maintain their superiority white men also subordinate and oppress members of other racial groups. Wallace (1979) commenting upon 'Black Macho' writes "I am saying that there is a profound distrust, if not hatred, between black men and black women that has been nursed along largely by white racism, but also by an almost deliberate ignorance on the part of blacks about the sexual politics of their experience".

Wallace identifies how black and white women have responded to new definitions of motherhood since the arrival of the Women's Movement. She indicates that new definitions of women allowed white women to work, to live outside the approval of men and to re-define concepts of mothering. Wallace continually suggests that feminism and the Black Civil Rights Movement affected black women very differently from white women. Wallace writes "her life had been simplified. Instead of confronting the problems that are presently repressing the black family, instead of battling with her fear of success, she could pursue her individual course which would allow her to make a provisional peace with herself. Never mind the bad odds under which her baby entered the world. In her less than serious moments she could even imagine that there was something liberated about what she had done" (page 173)

Both feminism and black consciousness have affected the lives of both black and white women but Wallace carefully details the ways in which black men have attempted to liberate themselves. These attempts have relied upon a history of sexual superiority and humiliation from white men and women. In this struggle black women have been forgotten. Wallace argues that the Black Power Movement was not concerned with equality but centred upon a superior black macho maleness. Whilst Wallace's argument is lucid and she argues for a political and economic basis for resolving the issues of

equality for black women, her style is polemic and politically committed. It draws our attention to the fact that female inequality is experienced very differently across racial and class boundaries. Forms of masculine power differ and are constructed out of different historical and economic situations.

It is important not to define racism and sexism in terms of individual attitudes and personal prejudices but to situate our work with black and Asian students in terms of British colonialisation.

#### Working with boys

The most important implications of my thesis, in terms of the future of further research, lies in the area of developing anti-sexist initiatives with both male teachers and male students. The work is complex and needs to be situated within a theoretical framework which does not diminish any feminist work which has been developed by working with girls.

Connell (1985) has drawn our attention to the relationship between the 'legitimate' violence of the army and police force and male violence. He situates violence in terms of institutionalised violence writing "much of the poofster bashing is done by police: much of the world's rape is done by soldiers in the context of war". But not all men are rapists, soldiers or queer

bashers and it may be possible to look at the ways in which violence has become associated with constructions of masculinity when we attempt to develop a framework of concepts which will inform our educational work with boys. It is very important in this initiative to stress that it is not only women and girls who become the victims of male aggressive behaviour. Other men, older men and male members of weaker status are also affected by exaggerated forms of masculinity.

When working with boys the feminist teacher needs to use her insights to highlight the ways in which different groups of people use different forms of control to dominate and oppress one another. Feminism has already shown how male behaviour affects the lives of women in a variety of areas. It has also focused upon the politics and institutional forms of male control. Work with boys must begin to analyse how forms of masculinity depend upon superiority, violence, competitiveness and aggression. It is important to demonstrate how this behaviour affects all subordinate groups. Boys can become victims of their own socialisation.

One of the crucial questions which must be raised when working with boys, is a critical review of conventional ways of understanding what it is to be male. This entails a different approach to the way in which we would be working with girls' groups. There have been a variety of approaches to anti sexist and anti racist

initiatives with special concerns for working with boys (11). Their objectives have differed and the outcomes varied and diverse. Some of the projects have been at a simple level of expecting the boys to be more co-operative and encouraging the girls to enter non-traditional subject areas. Others have been more ambitious and have sought out dialogue between heterosexual and homosexual forms of male identity. Further work in this area should enquire into how specific forms of masculinity are socially and hegemonically negotiated and reproduced within educational establishments.

Some of this work must be attempted with male members of establishments. Men do not have to [redacted] socially behave in unalterable ways. Men allow themselves to be in positions of control until they are challenged or seriously attacked by the pressure of opinion or argument.

But how are feminists to offer forms of resistance? It seems obvious that this resistance should concentrate upon the dynamic of gender relations but this avoids the ways in which class and racial hegemony functions. There are class and racial differences in the construction and expression of masculinity. Gay activists, whilst embracing their maleness, would argue that masculinity is not always associated with heterosexuality, fatherhood or 'acceptable' forms of family life.

Whilst as teachers we attempt to understand hegemonic masculinity, we must centre our analysis upon the ways in which white, educated heterosexual, affluent males continue to remain in control of our lives. It is possible to transform those powerful social relations in such a ways as to develop different, more reciprocal ways of distributing economic, cultural and emotional resources?

If we do not concentrate upon the ways in which masculinity is constructed, maintained and reproduced within schools, feminists will live their lives amidst unresolved conflicts. As teachers we have begun to understand how male behaviour and male structures of power affect the lives of women and girls. We must now examine the various contradictions that exist for boys as they enter male adulthood.



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1. "Girls Getting It Together" (1984) (pages 65, 135, 115).
2. "Girls Getting It Together" (1984).

The numbers at the bottom of the pages refer to the numbering used within the thesis.

The numbers at the end of each piece of writing refer to the page numbers used in "Girls Getting It Together".

The girls' writing is included without editing or correction to grammar and spelling mistakes. Some of the phrases refer to regional expressions.

## APPENDIX

### MY LIFE AT HNR AS A GIRL

I like school but I hate the rules. Once I remember when I only had one pair of trousers and I wore it to school to a maths lesson. She saw me in them and told me to go out of the room. I did. Then she said that if you wear the same trousers ever again in her lesson I would have to work out of my room. I told her that it was the only pair I had but she would not listen. So for the rest of the week I worked outside and later got a new pair of trousers. Life at school just is not fair for me and my friends. Every time our year tutor sees us in jeans, shades, or make up he will send us home. I bet he wouldn't do that to his children. Some boys wear tight trousers, so why can't the girls? Anyway when I go to Biology I feel so lazy and so do many others. The teacher shouts at me sometimes and I feel so embarrassed in front of the others. I failed Biology so i'm not entered for the exam. When some of the teachers start to care about other children I feel hurt. Is It because I'm Asian or because I'm not pretty like the other girls. I wonder.

(Page 1)

#### MY LIFE AT HNR AS A GIRL

Boys don't get told off as much about their clothes as the girls do. Girls get into trouble about wearing ear rings. They can only wear studs. Boys fight much more than girls. Some boys and girls are very cheeky to their teachers but the boys swear and the girls do not. The three new women teachers seem left out.

#### MY LIFE AT HNR AS A GIRL

At HNR you do not have to wear the actual uniform but you should wear school colours. Make-up, jewellery, jeans, coloured blouses and jumpers are not to be worn. I get on well with my teachers and friends but I have a bad temper. The girls and boys can choose any subjects they like when they are fourteen. Before that we all have a go at each subject. At the lower school I did not get on well with my teachers at times because I was cheeky, but now I get on well with my teachers. The girls and boys in my year are all friendly with each other. As I said I am bad tempered, once when I was thirteen I had a fight with a boy but the next day we were friends again. The things I hate about school is getting up, home work, teachers telling people off and being sent

home to change my clothes. In our school the head of maths is Mrs. Owen. Also the second year tutor is a female Miss Jones. The rest of the year tutors are male. The head of English, Metalwork, Woodwork, T.D are all male. Science and Games are female. The head of school is male, also the deputy head. We had a deputy head who was female but got promoted. The typist is female as are the dinner ladies. The cleaners are female and the care-taker is male. (page 2)

## MY LIFE AT HNR AS A GIRL

Girls get sent home more often than the boys because they do not wear the correct uniform. When the boys do not wear the uniform they do not really get sent home as often as the girls. Girls are not really supposed to act any differently from the boys but they are meant to act sensibly. In our school the girls are supposed to be equal to the boys but when the teachers need something heavy to be moved they always ask the boys to move them, never the girls. They seem to think that we are weak and are not capable of moving heavy objects. The girls do get on with the boys. The boys do not pick on us, they treat us like boys, they do not treat us any differently. In our school the men usually have the best paid jobs, such as the Head is a man. The deputy is either male or female. The Head of Maths is a female teacher. The Head of Second Year is a female.

(Page 4)

## MY LIFE AT HNR AS A GIRL

My life at HNR as a girl is mostly exiting. I would love to come to school dressed in jeans, trousers and jacket. I like to tease some of my friends and try to make them laugh but sometimes I get fed up with them and wished that I had new ones. I am alittle shy to talk to the boys who I like very much. I think that girls normally dress nicer than the boys and are more mature at the age of fifteen. I hate my brother in this school because If I talk to the boys, he tells my mum and I get in trouble. I like to wear ear-rings, necklaces, bangles and make up but when the tutor or the Head comes into the classroom I have to hide myself so that I don't get into trouble in front of the boys then the boys will tease me and this makes me angry. I like my friends to be exiting and mess around and not to be snobs or think that they are 'IT' because it makes me feel left out. In every school you will mostly find the Head as being a man, and the Deputy as being a lady. Mostly the men always get the high jobs and the women get second choice. In our school our Head of Maths is a lady, mostly in other schools it is a man. If a teacher is new and she hasn't got a car then she will have to walk down the annexe because

the teachers don't know her or because they  
don't know that she is going to the annexe.

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FOR SALE

A teacher: Male and bad tempered. Goes red.

A car driver. Quite good looking with one son.

FOR SALE

A man who makes you do lines 8,000 times.

Makes you feel hurt easily. Very stubborn.

You can have him for a tenner.

FOR SALE

For sale a very bad tempered man, who always seems to have a red face. Every time you see him he gives you the creeps. Seems very lazy because he always sends someone to get his dinner, and he nearly always wears the same red tie.

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## MY FUTURE HUSBAND

I would like my husband to be kind to me. I'd like him to love children very much. It would not really bother me if he was not really handsome, but as long as he is kind to me and my children. I would like a husband who does not lose his temper quickly, who does not fight or argue over any small thing. If we do argue about something I hope that we can work it out together and put things right. I would like a husband who agrees with me. I hope I have a husband who will love me and care for me and my children.

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## THE BEST THING ABOUT HAVING CHILDREN

The best thing about having children is you will have someone to love and who will love you as you get old.

The best thing about having children is that you can love them and comfort them. They will love you too.

The best thing about having children is that they keep you company and they might help you around the house as they are growing up. Also because they make jokes sometimes which make you laugh.

The best thing about having children is that you can show that you love each other (that is the one you are married to).

The best thing about having children is that you can dress them in beautiful clothes and comb their hair.

The best thing about having children is that if my husband has gone to work and i have not got a job the children will be company and a comfort.

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The best thing about having children is when you get married your husband would not allow you to go to work. Then of course you'll be bored all day thinking of what to do, and where to go. Anyway, while having a baby it could be quite fun. You would not be lonely, and bored because you'll be cleaning the baby, feeding it and so on. You could love your baby and bring it up the way your parents brought you up. You can always take your baby to parks and playgroups where you would meet new people and you would enjoy yourself.

Having a baby could be a lovely pleasure to your life.

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### THE BEST

The best thing about having children is loving each other. This way people can express their love to each other. Also when the husband is at work you won't be alone. Children bring happiness into life and expand the family. And when the man and woman have a fight the children usually there to give comfort. Also less fights occur between to people, but sometimes it is vise versa. Dressing, taking the child for walks is fun. Teaching the child is also fun and interesting. You can learn a lot about yourself.

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### AND THE WORST

The worst thing about having children is the pain you suffer at birth. Also when you have to walk about with a fat stomach people stare at you. You cannot go out to discos, parties or any other lively evening or out incase you get hurt. Also if you did go you will feel odd. When you have had the child waking up in the middle of the night is very upsetting. Changing nappies, feeding (especially breast feeding. I do not like it myself.) When you want to go out in the evenings you shall have to find a baby sitter and pay her. So by

paying her and spending on the evening out could turn out to be very expensive. Children also are fussy at times and get on people's nerves.

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## MY LIFE AS A SECRETARY

7.30 am

Wake up. have a wash,  
dress up, go downstairs,  
pack my stuff and have  
breakfast.

8.00 am

Go to the bus stop, catch  
the bus, go to the  
newsagent shop, buy some  
sweets.

9.00 am

Inside the office, doing  
typing.

10.00-10.30 am

Break, have tea, talk.

10.30 am

Back at work, take notes,  
type letters.

1.00-2.00 pm

Lunch, go to the shop,  
talk with friends.

2.00-3.00 pm

Tidy up the files in  
order, take some more  
notes.

4.00 pm

Pack my things, go home,  
catch the bus.

4.30 pm

At home, put tele on,  
make tea.

5.00 pm

Finish of some work that  
needs to be finished.

5.20 pm

Go the the next door  
neighbours house, talk.

6.00 pm

Come home, rest.

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## MY JOB AS A NURSE

7.30 am

Wake up, have a wash.

8.30 am

Have breakfast and pack my bags and leave for the bus.

9.15 am

Catch bus, often in cold weather.

9.45 am

Arrive at hospital and change into nurse's uniform and low-heeled shoes. Tie hair back.

10.15 am

Go see patients and make sure they are comfortable.

11.00 am

Clean dirty bed sheets. Wash patients' clothes for two hours.

1.00 pm

Go on duty with doctor to maybe do an operation or something else.

3.00 pm

Have an hour's break in  
staff cafeteria.

4.00 pm

My duty to give patients  
their tea.

5.00 pm

Go and talk to patients  
and make them feel  
comfortable.

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## LIFE AS A SECRETARY

<u>7.30am</u>	Wake up, tidy up, wash get dressed.
<u>8.00am</u>	Have breakfast, make up face, wash dirty breakfast dishes, go to work.
<u>9.15am</u>	Reach work, go to the bosses room and collect the day's work, give messages, make phone calls. Start working.
<u>11.00am</u>	Carry on doing the work given, answer phone calls, make arrangements with important people to see the boss.
<u>12.00noon</u>	Dinner time, go to the canteen with friends, eat dinner, talk, sometimes go for a walk. Do outside jobs for the boss.
<u>3.00pm</u>	Go to the bank for the boss, post all the mail, get some orders for him, go back to work and carry on with the work. Have a cup of tea and make some for the boss.

4.00pm Try and complete all the work that was given, tidy my office, then tidy the bosses desk and ask permission to leave.

4.30pm Go round talking to mates say goodbye and go home.

5.00pm Have some tea, make a list of things then go shopping.

5.20pm Complete doing shopping, come home and take a break. Then start cooking.

6.00pm Have a meal, tidy the house up, have a bath and watch television.

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## MY LIFE AS A SECRETARY

7.30am Get up and wash my face get dressed and go down.

8.0am Make my breakfast and eat it.  
Get my things ready. Go to the bus stop and catch the 9 o'clock bus.

9.15am Get to work, tidy my desk and do some typing. Make telephone calls.

11.00am Have a break and then get back to work.

12.00-1.00pm Have sandwiches or go to the Fish and Chip Shop.

2.00pm Take messages for the boss, write letters and type them.

3.00pm Make sure that the computer has been set up and that everyone has got something to do in the office.

4.00pm

Have another break. Go and  
talk to my friends.

4.30pm

Start to clean up my desk and  
get ready to go home.

5.00pm

Go to the bus stop and catch  
the bus and go home.

5.20pm

Have my tea when I get home.

6.00pm

Sit down, read a book or watch  
television.

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MY JOB IN WOOLWORTHS

<u>7.30am</u>	Get up, wash face, got to toilet, comb hair, put make up on.
<u>8.00am</u>	Make breakfast, brush teeth, go to the bus stop.
<u>9.15am</u>	Go in Woolworths, take coat off, put on working coat, sit in staff room, talk. Go and start work.
<u>11.00am</u>	Serve customers, go to toilet, have a snack and a quick chat.
<u>12.30pm</u>	Go to lunch, talk to friends, have a drink go back to work.
<u>2.00pm</u>	Be nice to customers, continue serving and do not make a fuss.
<u>3.00pm</u>	Quick change over and back to the same counter.
<u>4.00pm</u>	Close store, go to the staff room have rest, coffee, pack up and go home.

4.30pm

Come home, make tea, put up  
feet and relax.

5.00pm

Iron clothes, wash working  
clothes, hang them up, ring  
friends and talk about work.

5.20pm

Too tired, go to sleep.

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### HUSBAND

- 1) I want a husband to keep me company.
- 2) I want a husband to be love by some-one.
- 3) I want a husband to live happily.
- 4) I want a husband to have a family.
- 5) I want a husband to look after him.
- 6) I want a husband to take me places.
- 7) I want a husband to help me through life.

### I WANT A LOVER BECAUSE

- 1) Travel the world with.
- 2) To be loving and affectionate.
- 3) Because I don't want a family.
- 4) To have a substantial wage.
- 5) So you can kick him out if you find out he has other lovers and he comes home anytime he pleases.

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## TEN REASONS FOR LEAVING HOME

1. Fighting.
2. Other women in his life.
3. Not enough money.
4. Arguments against in laws.
5. Jealousy.
6. Unfair child care.
7. Drunkenness.
8. Watching too much football.
9. Never going out together.
10. Selfishness.

1. Him taking me for granted.
2. Him hitting me.
3. Him refusing to take responsibility for the children.
4. Him not handing over his wages.
5. Him going out and not letting me.
7. Argument over contraception.
8. Argument over me getting pregnant and him not being interested.
9. Him bringing all his friends around drunk, making noise, waking the children up and showing off.
10. Him not decorating the house to an acceptable standard.

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The worst incident that happened to me is when I was accused of theft from British Home Stores, although the teacher had a description of the person who actually done the theft and gave my name and address. The teacher kept trying to catch me out by asking what lessons I had - what teacher I had - and things like what teacher I had and what things did I do (the work). I asked the teacher if I could ask my parents to come to the school and sort it out properly but she refused.

The teacher had the description and the description read My Name, What clothes I was wearing. My hair colour. The only thing what was right was my name and address. I did not wear black and did not have brown hair. After chasing all round the school asking the teachers if I was in lessons and checking the register she finally did not even apologise. This really got me mad. She knew all the time it was not me but because I was the idiot in the class (made them laugh) she still said it was me. My mother came up and she said she had said sorry but she never. I never forgot this.....

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The worst things about school are that the teachers are on one side of the barrier and the pupils are on the other. Although the teachers are classed together they don't work together to put any ideas into action because they can't be bothered to back each other. At my School I'm in the 6th Form, out of 40 lessons I only have 32, 5 of them are blocked together. For this whole block I'm made to stay on school premises. I look at this as a pure waste of time. Other local school students are allowed to leave school.

Another bad point is that I did 'Accounts' to fill up some time. I went for two weeks, hated the lesson, then my friend and myself stopped going. At Christmas (1.5 months later) one of my teachers found out. Now at the moment I have been sent back to the lessons. I'm not taking the exam because I've missed too much work! Yet I still have to go to the lessons.

The girls at my school are split.. the 6th form and the 4th + 5ths are Comprehensive and the lower school is Grammar. There is much conflict with the Grammar kids who expect us to be there for their convenience.

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The worst thing that happened to me in my new school was when I went to my P.E. lesson and I had had arguments on the P.E. teacher before but she had never got me really mad so I wouldn't really shout at her and I walked into my lesson and she asked me where my P.E. blouse and pumps were and I told her I'd forgotten them so I went into my lesson and she started shouting at me and she said that she had got my P.E. shirt in her office and asked me whose I was wearing. I told her it was my sisters and she started accusing me of robbing it and she was saying why have you forgotten it, why, why, why and I turned round and said I don't know. I didn't do it on purpose she started asking me questions I got really mad and shouted "what do you think I am - a bloody dictionary". She said "And I don't like your blouse" and told me to get out when she came in she said, "I think you owe me an apology or are you going to add to your rudeness". I said 'Yes' and she said "Come on then" and I shouted 'sorry'. She said "I don't think that's good enough" and I said "Well it will have to be" I said "And you've got the cheek to say you don't like my blouse."

I said "When you pay for it you can say whether you like it or not. I said "But you don't so you can shut up". Then she said "Get outside my office". And I said "Don't worry I'm going" AND THAT WAS THAT....

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## SCHOOL

It's warm and dry in cold weather. I get free dinners (being in care). The only time that it's not worth going to school is in the summer before the six weeks holiday. Then we go down the park and sunbath or go paddling in the kids pool.

I don't wag school in the winter. I walk the streets while it's raining and by the afternoon I'm starving. The teachers are wicked. They are what they call us .... ANIMALS .....

They can punch and kick, swear and bite. When a teacher hits you automatically hit back or I would and have done.

A teacher is thoughtless object and not a person with feeling in teaching hours.

School has its good points, dinner tickets can be flogged and a profit made. Loo rolls can be nicked and sold to the market trader down the road for 5p or 10p a time and exercise books and chalk and board rubbers also make money.

All in all for the last six years you learn to make a profit and survive instead of learning English Literature or French.

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The best thing about school is you often get teachers who can understand your problems and you can have a laugh and a joke with them in every lesson you have with them. The lessons are hardly ever boring because you can have a good laugh in them as nearly every teacher joins in with you and we don't mind them joining in.

The worst thing about school is teachers often come out with remarks about you and your family and they will occasionally hit you if they haven't got any patience. In my year at school (5th year) we have only got a couple of coloured boys and about five to six coloured girls but if a coloured boy in a year gets picked on in school the other lads leave it up to him to sort it out for himself, yet if a coloured girl gets picked on which hardly ever happens all the coloured girls stick together and the white girls in my school don't stick together. I'm not racist at all as I often stick up for my coloured mates and I go out with coloured boys but one coloured girl I know thinks I'm racist and she won't get it in her head that I'm not racist but it doesn't bother me as I can defend myself and stick up for myself without anybody else's help.

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The worst thing about my mother is when I tell her something she nearly always has to tell my dad.

The worst thing about my mother is her short fused temper towards some of my ideas.

The worst thing about my mother is she often moans about my friends but the worst thing of all is that if anything goes wrong in the house I always get blamed for it.

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The worst thing about my mother is moaning at me when I go out every night instead of helping her more in the house.

The worst thing about my mother is that if she disapproves about something instead of saying so outright she has to make sarcastic comments.

The worst thing about my mother is worrying about where I am.

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## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF ARTHUR WINTER BOTTOM

I was called from my bed at 7.30am this morning. Stubling down the stairs I was told that breakfast was on the table. Mom had cooked me bacon, sausages and eggs and even poured me a cup of tea. My tow sisters had prepared their own breakfast- a couple slices of toast.

At 8.30am i left the house to go to school. I am in my final year taking 5 C.S.E. at the end hopefully. AT times i feel really thick when i think of my two sisters who only took 8 G.C.E exams.

Lunch time is here alreedy. Barry my only mal friend sits andeat his lunch with me. At 3.30pm it is time to go home . Mom has a glass of milk and some cookies ready for me. She asks what type of day I8ve had. "The same as usual" i reply almost timidly. I switched the televisionon, just ih time for "dangermouse" This is really ace.

My sisters arrive home at 5.00pm. They are tried but have togo straight upstairs to tidy their rooms. Mine has already been tidied for me ..... I don't have to bother. {tea is at

six. As usual my plate is piled up high. At 8.30pm I switch on the video games. Space invaders is my favourite. At midnight I go to bed, ready for another totally predictable day. I might even do some homework tommorrrp. Who knows? perhaps mom will do it for me?

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## TEN YEARS TIME

### My weaknesses

At work - fear of redundancy

- fear of not getting a staff nurse or sisters job even though I have all the qualifications. Fear of being a sister in charge of the ward for the first time. Hoping I will remain caring and considerate.

At home - Fear of not having the home I want, a feeling of inadequacy.

- Fear of drifting apart from my mother and father.

Relationships - I would probably be married, my fear of rowing over trivial things. Not knowing what to cook for dinner. fear of drifting apart because our lives take totally different courses. Hoping that we will always be happy

### My strong points

At work - knowing if I work hard I will

become a competent nurse,  
knowing do have the inner strength  
to take charge of the ward full of  
people whose lives that I do care  
for others and my feelings will  
never change throughout my career.

At home - Knowing I can make the effort to  
keep in touch with my mother,  
father and sister.

Relationships - Being truthful and taking over  
the things we do with our  
lives and how it affects us  
both. Working to have a baby  
knowing we are happy and will  
always remain so.

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### IN TEN YEARS TIME

In ten years time the thing that will stop me going to the top of my chosen profession will be lack of self-confidence. I probably will take a lot from my employer eg late nights, dirty jokes, but not sexual harrasment.

At home I will either be living with someone or alone. My failings there will be that probably would not want to get married and have children. I would also fail my boyfriend if he was the talkative type all the time as I would like to keep contact with my parents but by that time I would not give in to them as I would of before. As my mother is very possessive and tries to run my life and would not be able to.

My failing in being social with people is that I like beign the centre attention and when I do get that I don't want it. I could also be left alone, but this would lead to problems if no one invited me to parties anymore when I feel like company. I would like children but not until I am in my 30's and of course if I was married then my husband would want children right away.

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## IN TEN YEARS TIME

In ten years time I hope that my home life will be more stable not that the atmospheres I did not notice as a child would be swept under the carpet and forgotten. But that i would be more understanding and tolerant about others, namely my family's attitude and behaviour.

At work i hope to be successful and confident so that I might prove to myself and others that being married is not a lifes vocation. I'd hope that and if not that I would have the strength to turn around and do something more fulfilling.

By this time I expect to have a flat of my own and maybe a cat so that there would be something to come home to. I would expect to see my parents most at weekends and from this a newer and closer relationship.

I think that above all I would want to be more honest and fairer towards people, especially those closest to me. At this moment I know my biggest problem is to jump to conclusions and form unreasonable hates. I hope to grow out these weaakness as if i don't know that someone could become hurt from this weakness of mine.

The relationship I would like is a loving, kind and warm relationship more as a friend. I wouldn't want to be possessive or in fact for him to feel tied down or to me either. I don't really expect to be married but I hope the relationship would be a filling thing in my life.

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## IN TEN YEARS TIME

In ten years time I expect myself to be in the army and be in another country. The most thing I am frightened of is being left out of things and nobody wanting to know me. The rules in England is different from the rules in Germany, so it would be hard for, me to get use to the rules in Germany.

I hope I'll meet my husband in the army and some day will get married and have children of our own. I am also afraid of letting the family down and other people. For most women now days they have to be more determined and show people that being a women is something and not being a women stuck in the house doing the washing up, ironing and cooking etc.

If I do meet my husband in the army I hope we'll stay together and always love each other. And I hope we'll be able to share our problems. I hope my husband to be a sensible, caring, loving person and I hope he doesn't have affairs with other women and I'll hope he is honest.

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In 10 years time I could be married or living with my boyfriend and maybe have a child. Hopefully i can get a job. My main weakness is coping with the situation when I reach a certain age ..... how am I going to manage with myself and other people.....

I am mostly frightened because my husband/boyfriend might expect me to do everything and I might be able to cope and we might have an big argument and split up. The meaning husband/boyfriend might depend on me to do everything because I am a women and women are expected to do everything in the house from washing up to tying shoe laces. Even though I am going to be a women in 10 years time.

I want to be loved and not to be loved for what I am or what I do. to make my relationship successful work and be successful. Also what I do, I want to make sure that I want to make sure that I am good at it when it comes to make a decision. I want that particular job and I am happy at it and I can cope and not be frightened to speak out.

I want to make sure is to do what I am happy at.

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The best thing about my mother is that she hasn't got too many restriction on me. I can go anywhere I like as long as it is suitable and respectable. She always has my meals ready for me when I get in. Whenever I want my clothes washed to go out she always washes them for me. As my mother and me get on fairly well we are able to co-operate and agree with most things.

The worst thing about my mother is that if anything happens in the house I always get blamed for it. Another worst thing about my mother is that she doesn't like me hanging around with my coloured mates and she won't let me go out with coloured boys. I get on better with coloured boys than I do with white boys. My mom nags at me a lot and always criticises me. If I want to go anywhere with my coloured mates I have to be in half an hour to an hour earlier than I do with my white mates. I can't seem to speak to my mom about my problems. I don't have many problems. The only problem I have is going out with boys as I have only been with coloured boys and my mom doesn't like it.

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#### THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A MOTHER IS

looking after your children and watching them grow up from the age of about six months with their rattles and models. There is the experience of the first time the child says something or takes its first step. It's good to see your love and attention with the child when the child grows up, teaching it right and wrong in life and how to be independent, caring and giving advice. You teach the child something from your experience. When you're a mother your children kind of look on you for advice and the mother helps in a hard situation.

When the child grows up and is having his or her own children and getting married, the mother can give advice about married life and how to cope when things go wrong. Mothers always give good advice when their children are setting out in life.

#### THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A MOTHER

The best thing about being a mother is the comfort the children will bring you, and being able to care for someone. But the most important thing to me is that you have something from your husband or person you love and that you have to care for it and love it as much as you love your husband because it is something to bring you together. (Page 85)

### THE WORST THING ABOUT BEING A MOTHER

The worst thing about being a mother is not being able to do the things you used to be able to do when you were free and having a child who is totally ungrateful to you all through their life.

### THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A MOTHER

The best thing about being a mother is having the love and security of your family. You can have fun seeing your children grow up and help them in their hour of need. You can also give your children what you never had e.g. A better education and the freedom of being a teenager or child.

### THE WORST THING ABOUT BEING A MOTHER

The worst thing about being a mother is staying at home on your own while your husband has gone to work and your children are at school if you have any. You'll be busy doing all the housework and when it's time for your husband to come home you'll have to prepare their meals. Time usually passes very quickly when you're working.

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### THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A MOTHER

The best thing about being a mother is that you have company at home, someone to talk to. You might love children and want a few so that you can bring them up and give them something that you didn't get. You might love going to clinics or nurseries, but you can only go to a nursery if you have a child.

The best thing about being a mother is being able to watch your children grow up and buy things for them. In your old age being able to know that your children will look after you and love you as you've loved them and watch them teach their children what you've taught them.

### THE WORST THING ABOUT BEING A MOTHER

The worst thing about being a mother is having to stop a career because of your family and being bored with nothing to keep you occupied. Not that you'd have any free time when you've got children.

## THE WORST THING ABOUT BEING A MOTHER

The worst thing about being a mother is that you can't go out in the evenings, you can't go out shopping alone. You have to go to the nursery and get the kids and take them. You cannot get much sleep.

The worst thing about being a mother is that you don't get much freedom or going out anymore with your friends without your husband arguing. Your children can get in the way if you cannot get a baby sitter and your husband won't look after the children. Children can make you very depressed.

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### THE BEST THING ABOUT HAVING CHILDREN IS

You don't have to get bored because you can feed the baby to make it healthy. Then your husband will be happy because when he comes home from work while you are making the dinner your husband can play with his kids.

### THE WORST THING ABOUT HAVING CHILDREN

The worst thing about having children is when they wake you up in the middle of the night.

The worst thing about having children is that they get on your nerves. Also when they are about the age of five they get even worse.

The worst thing about having children is when it comes to feeding them and they wake you up in the middle of the night while you are sleeping.

### THE WORST THING ABOUT HAVING CHILDREN

The worst thing about having children is that they start to cry in the middle of the night and wake you and that makes you angry. Also because children can't look after themselves and they have snotty noses.



The worst thing about having children is they  
play you up.

The worst thing about having children is  
trying to keep them quietll while you watch  
your favourite programme.

The worst thing about having children is the  
pain you have to suffer at birth.

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GOING TO COLLEGE

7.30 am	Get up, wash face, do housework, drink tea. No breakfast.
8.00 am	Put clothes on, make my bed.
8.30 am	Leave house, walk down Soho Road and down Lozells Road.
9.15 am	Begin retailing.
10.30 am	Break, play badminton. Go to the shops.
11.00 am	Typing lesson.
12.00 noon	Lunch hour, have canteen meal. Go for a walk to get some fresh air.
1.00 pm	Child care lesson.
2.00 pm	Break, watch TV Play cards.

2.30 pm	Meet new friends, pay electricity bill for Mum. Help clear up for teacher.
3.00 pm	Watch videos.
3.20 pm	Leave for home.
4.00 pm	Do shopping. Make the tea for my brothers.

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## MY DAY AS A NURSE

7.30 am	Get up, wash. Have breakfast if I feel like it.
8.00 am	Leave the house.
8.30 am	Reach the hospital and start changing into my uniform.
9.15 am	Start working.
11.00 am	Getting busy with patients.
11.30 am	Get the patients ready to go for dinner.
12 noon	Having dinner.
1.00 pm	Talking and taking all patients to beds.
3.00 pm	Have a drink.
4.00 pm	Phone a friend or relative.

4.30 pm	Give patients a cake, toast, etc.
5.00 pm	Leave the hospital.
5.30 pm	Go to the shop on the way home.
6.00 pm	Reach home and have a cup of tea or coffee.

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### WHEN I'M TWENTY

I hope I will be in a different country, not married and working in a hairdressing salon with lots of nice people. I hope to travel around the world with Barbara. I want to be a singer with Barbara as well.

When I am twenty I may be either in a job, or I may have a relationship going, or I may be married and have children. At the age of twenty I'll have left school and got a job at hairdressing. Hopefully I'll have moved away from here.

### WHERE WILL I BE WHEN I'M TWENTY YEARS

When I'm twenty years old I'll be probably married and living with my husband and his family if they're here. If I'm not married I'll be still working and earning money for my wedding. I would like to marry a boy who I know, but from a different country. But before I do get married I would like to do a course on nursery nursing. The place I'm looking forward to go to get married is Singapore which is in Malaysia.

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After embarking on the house job I realised that there would probably be more opportunities if I gained extra qualifications. I decided to opt for gynaecology since I had come across many (male) gynaecologists who had been extremely unsympathetic towards women's problems. I thought it would be beneficial to women in general to have a feminist doctor to turn to.

I was wrong about starting the course, since my three-year pre-medical course had been very male orientated, I was worried about whether I would fit in.

About the marriage question; I had some boyfriends but was not seriously involved with any of them since I realised that the 'couple' unit can easily degenerate to a very patriarchal unit, and I was not willing to let that happen. I decided to live on my own—since this would give me the best opportunity to study quietly and I would have fewer private commitments. The doctors flat that I had had ample space for a single person, although things like the double bed suggested that I should have a partner! I had been given the impression that living alone was not desirable but during the year although I felt lonely at times, I invited many friends around

to stay, and I was of course freer to go out when or where I wanted.

I had to work quite hard on the gynaecology course, suffering endless jokes (!) about womens' bodies which I tried not to take to heart, although several times I considered applying to the EOC about sexual harrasment!

My parents were disappointed that I had not elected to marry; they kept dropping subtle hints about wanting grand-children. However I felt that it would not be right for me to marry, such is the discrimination in the medical service that women are required to stay away for ages if they have children, men of course only for a week at most!

Living on the grant was disappointing since I might have been receiving a houseman's (sic) salary, but I reminded myself of the increased career prospects that I stood to gain.

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I accepted the house job at the hospital in Leeds and first of all settled down to get used to the independence of having a job of my own and a flat was wonderful though my parents worried about me being far from home. For that reason I did not apply for any further jobs immediately. I let my parents get accustomed to the situation first .... but I did make many enquiries and read all I could about geriatric medicine and gynaecology. Four months later, having settled down completely I applied to do a course in geriatric medicine and was duly accepted. The course begins shortly. I haven't regretted that decision yet, but time will tell. At least I've got the experience of a year's job behind me. As for the question of marriage. I'm now engaged and getting married in a few months time; whether that's the right thing to do or not I don't know but my parents would have had a fit if I'd decided otherwise.

I didn't imagine, after I passed my exams that the work would be harder than ever before. The job at St Matthew's involved very long hours of work for relatively low wages. The reality of being a doctor was not as I had thought. I decided to try for a qualification in gynaecology rather than geriatrics as it seems to have better prospects. (Page 111)

I decided to apply for the qualification in geriatric medicine as it was under-staffed and I reckoned I would have a good chance of employment and a successful career.

I knew therefore that my salary would't be instantly forthcoming but that I needed to start making plans. I had enough money to buy a car as I knew I would not have financial difficulties any longer.

When I bought it I felt much more independent. I had my own flat and was financially more secure and, being able to make more decisions for myself, was no longer having to rely so much on other people. This feeling of self-reliance and independance gave me a taste for freedom which swayed my decision on marriage. I decided that I did not want to be tied down, bust at the beginning of my career. I wanted to be able to make all the decisions for the immediate future without the responsibility of disrupting someone else's life.

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Well I got the car, whether or not you can call a clapped out mini decent is open for debate and here I am in geriatrics. I always felt I would end up taking a job I was sure to get, the coward in me couldn't bear to fail, especially not up against my colleagues who were sure to get into gynaecology. Marriage was never really a strong option for me, I can't commit myself to one person for the rest of my life, a solitary life seems much more appealing. Equally a partnership has its drawbacks, the stubborn element in my character would never allow me to be wrong.

So I'm stuck in my own flat which never seems to get cleaned, and I'm working my way up in the geriatric hospital I've been assigned to. There are two people above me in line for a senior doctor's post, but it leaves me with a chance of promotion. I must admit, the prospect of an endless career with old people is not my idea of bliss, maybe I'll take a refresher course and branch out into psychology or something. Maybe I won't I can see in a few years time I'll look back on this and wonder what on earth I was doing here.

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He had passed for the same college, so after much discussion we decided to live together for at least the following year until getting married. He decided eventually to enrol for gynaecology, as the profession was more highly paid than geriatric medicine. However, after two months work he soon realised that the course involved much more work than he had imagined, in order to pass the finals at the end of the year. Gradually, he was spending more and more time working in the library and the labs, leaving home very early and returning very late. After six months of this I suddenly approached him with the subject of my taking up an extra nursing course, as previously I had only been doing a part time course. He replied that it was out of the question; we had little enough time to spend together as it was, and in any case there was no need as he would be earning sufficient salary to maintain both of us.

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When I think about what decisions I had made over the last year I wonder now whether I have made the right choice by not applying for the extra qualifications in geriatric medicine or gynaecology. My opinion was that I should accept the job as it was what I had been waiting for: a salary which I could survive on happily as a single person and the freedom of a flat and car, although my reckless driving didn't do much for the car's body work two months ago. It makes me laugh when I was worrying about if I should get married or live with someone. It's not the most important issue at my age, and with a career like mine, with all its promotional possibilities, marriage and children would have been a difficult responsibility. I have had a boyfriend for the last three months. He accepts that I don't want a deep relationship just yet, but he's a great person and we help each other out and as he's in the same occupation, we have nearly the same social hours .....

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The celebration came and went. I sent in my application for additional qualifications in geriatric medicine and settled into my doctor's flat. The salary was very reasonable and the car was bought at the arrival of my fourth wage packet. The extra exam meant hard work was necessary if not essential, and the disappointment of not reaching the standard was shattering.

My parents felt that I had made the wrong decision and I began to regret my actions. For a few months my work was poor and mental state failing. My personal life was not how I had imagined it to be - I had expected to be the idol of the nurses on the ward; the strong-figured doctor image. The thought that I was undesirable was devastating.

The depression subsided gradually and I began to swot for my qualifications. My parents - having come to terms with my career decisions - backed me up throughout the year and I began to make a good collection of friends. My qualifications were boosted by the extra examination results.

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## OPPORTUNITIES

After the celebrations, it was back to reality and time to make decisions. I immediately accepted the job at St. Matthew's College Hospital, as I felt I needed the experience more than anything else. Meanwhile I carried on looking at alternative positions with more opportunities for advancement.

I also applied for the additional qualifications in geriatric medicine. I wanted to be as well equipped as I could be for my job. Also the fact of under staffing in the branch ward mean opportunities for promotion to more demanding jobs.

I decided quickly not to get married, at that stage in my career. There was no hurry or necessity to marry, I preferred to get myself settled in my job and my flat and concentrate on my own life.

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...AND I LOVE IT-

I accepted the house job and started work a week after passing my exams. I soon found a small flat near to the hospital, and arranged a mortgage. The care has not yet materialised as I am putting most of my salary into decorating the flat.

I am now unsure that I made the best choice after my finals, but as I didn't pass brilliantly I am unsure whether further study would be a good choice.

I may accept a place at a general practioners nearby, although I am now settled at the hospital.

I have no plans to marry although I am involved in a steady relationship with a doctor who also works at St Matthews.

For the first time in my life I am alone, but I enjoy the freedom of my own flat. I have many friends so do not feel lonely I simply feel free to do as I please. I want to enjoy this freedom for many more years before I settle down to have children.



For the first time I have enough money to live  
as I wish with no one to tell me what to do..  
and I love it.

It was suggested to me that we lived together in order to have a realistic understanding of our relationship. We both earned more or less the same salary and had enquired about a joint mortgage. We had already sought contraceptive advice and owned our own transport. We were all set to face a different experience when I was offered a job in Edinburgh. I was desperately eager to take it as the salary was higher than the one I was receiving and most importantly, because it was a chance to become more involved in the career I loved and to realise my long-held ambitions. He had known for a long time that I was ambitious, and that promotion might mean living in another part of the country and in view of this, when I received this opportunity, I expected him to be willing to move up to Edinburgh with me and continue our relationship as we had planned. However, he didn't want to move so far away and said I should refuse the offer. I saw no reason to do this as I realised that it was unlikely that I'd get the same chance again, so I dug my heels in and said I was going whether or not he came with me. He refused. I wondered what he would have thought had the positions been reversed and I knew that he would have expected me to follow him. I'm not sure how I would have reacted to that either

though. T any rate, the incident proved to me that there was not enough love in our relationship to ensure that it would last; not enough give and take. I'm just glad that it happened before we'd married.

It was suggested to me that we lived together in order to have a realistic understanding of our relationship. We both earned more or less the same salary and had enquired about a joint mortgage. We had already sought contraceptive advice and owned our own transport. We were all set to face a different experience when Geoff was offered a job in Edinburgh. I was not prepared to give up my job which was very important to me, I was doing well within the job and felt it unlikely that I would find another job which would mean an increase in salary or satisfy me so much if I were to follow Geoff to Edinburgh.

Geoff however was keen to take up the job which would mean an increase in salary and we spent a long time discussing the various possibilities. In the end we decided to live separately again for the short term with Geoff following his job while I remained in mine. We still would meet at weekends. This did not work out and I was continually feeling under pressure to give up my job. In the end I was forced to give up my job to follow him and spent a long time looking for a new job.

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It was suggested to me that we lived together in order to have a realistic understanding of our relationship. We both earned more or less the same salary and had inquired about a joint mortgage. We had already sought contraceptive advice and owned our own transport. We were all set to face a different experience when I was offered a job in Edinburgh.

Scotland had always appealed to us. We often went there during holidays. We hoped eventually to save up enough money to buy a small holding with a croft. Having had some farming experience this lay at the back of my mind. My partner and I discussed the whole situation. Both of us are quite adventurous and I was lucky that he did support me. However things would be different to start with. While I moved to Scotland, his research grant was available for another year in Dublin. We wondered whether this would put pressures on our relationship. We'd have to see. I was quite lonely to begin with and disliked being alone, the job was fulfilling though and I was offered much scope. I was also lucky that I was well paid. Our account was getting quite fat. And I'd seen a croft, with a commune near by that looked quite appealing.

It was suggested to me that we lived together in order to have a realistic understanding of our relationship. We both earned more or less the same salary and had inquired about a joint mortgage. We had already sought contraceptive advice and owned our own transport. We were all set to face a different experience when I was offered a job in Edinburgh.

If it had been any other situation my independence would have been overruled everything and I wouldn't have hesitated in accepting the job; but I had to think about what my decision would mean. I had been living with my partner for a couple of months and enjoyed the life with that person. I felt wanted and found satisfaction mentally and physically.

However, I had underestimated the opinions of my partner. Although we were living together on equal terms, he always wanted to be known as the breadwinner and that he had a dominant part in the relationship.

I explained to him the situation, and although his ego was hurt, he accepted the fact that there were no ties. I wanted to stick up for myself but I thought I had hurt him by wanting my own way, so in the end I never accepted the position.

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A neighbour of ours who had no close family was dying of cancer. She was seriously affected by it and in a great deal of pain. Her family had rejected her and refused to look after her as they thought that she would be too much trouble. The task of caring for her fell to my mother who did not know her at all well. She ended up spending most of every day with the woman during her last few weeks of life. No one else would visit her. She needed everything doing for her, was sick many times a day, was extremely lonely and in terrible pain. It is a strain to watch anyone suffer whether or not you are close to them and I would help my mother. It built up a tremendous admiration for her on me at the time and energy she gave to the woman and made me feel much closer for a time.

### I COULD HARDLY LOOK AT MY PARENTS

The most stressful situation I have experienced was last year; after the 'O' levels I decided I wanted to leave school and go on to the sixth form college. This decision was not accepted by my parents. We shouted, tried to reason, cried, and moaned but a leve of understanding seemed to be out of reach. They had decided that I was staying at school, even after I had arranged and gone through with an interview at college, which accepted me. Those two weeks were sheer hell. I could hardly look at my parents, I hated them, they resented me-our relationship had broken down.

I still resent the fact that they used their power over me to force me into a situation I was not at ease with. The stress was broken when I was just too tired to uphold my arguments.

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I can't remember ever feeling particularly close or distant to my mother, though I am sure sub-consciously I have been. I know I have often thought "Thank God" she was there or could sympathise and understand how I felt. She knows me far better than I realise,



however no-one really 'knows' anyone sometimes. I feel attached to her, occasionally in an unpleasant way. This link makes me feel as if she is sometimes pulling me back to her.

Both my mother and my father have never expressed any wish of what they want me to be or the values they think I should possess. Naturally what one sees in ones parents stays with us to a certain extent, but the reaction these values or whatever is always. The wish they have always expressed is my happiness, fulfillment in what I pursue. Something which I value greatly.

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About two years ago I started to wear contact lenses. Anyway, after a few weeks of wearing them my eyes swelled up and I was blinded for approximately six days. My relationship with my mother blossomed: she held me tight when the pain became unbearable, she bathed my eyes, comforted me, caressed me and became my eyes for those few days. I was totally dependent upon her and trusted her completely for the first time I can remember. Somehow she was always there when needed, disappeared when not needed as if our minds were one and the same and we could sense each other needs. It seems rather stupid looking back on it, but those few days, that short period meant so much to me. And to think I often doubt her.

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A few months ago our family suffered an incident caused by me which upset its natural balance. It was Sunday morning I had been out to a nightclub with a friend, and had missed the 2.00am bus home. It was my own fault that we had not left in time, although my friend's attitude did not help me.

I opened the back door with my key at about 3.30am having come home on the 3.00am bus. There in the kitchen my mother was sitting by the table. She didn't have to speak, her red tired eyes and angry expression said it all but she did;

"What time do you call this?"

"I missed the bus."

"How can you miss the bus."

The argument continued and developed into a complete slanging match. After threats to leave home, retaliated by threats to throw me out of home.

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The times when I feel least close to my mother are when I am trying to argue with her over a current issue; I know that since she has an Economics degree she will know more about things like Britain's membership of the E.E.C. but I feel that she is trying to impose her points of view on me.

## A STRESSFUL SITUATION

I felt sick, sweaty and angry. Eczema was riddling its way over my hands and knees and my face had cracked up and gone taught because of it. I just wanted to jump into a lake and swim and be clean. It was probably something to do with exams; something I've never yet been quite able to come to terms with. I remember waking up on the morning of the exam and trying to convince myself I was dreaming. I didn't want to talk to anyone, say or do anything. Walking into the exam room was dreadful. You sit and watch the paper blistered with words and you reply to them as best you can, spew all the knowledge your brain can on to the paper and feel really drained at the end. I wonder why.

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### MY HEART WOULD RUSH

I always undergo stress before music examinations, situations where, if I were rational, I would realise that the basic fear is irrational, since the preparation for these exams is always vigorous, and teachers do not enter pupils who would fail. This however never occurs to me, and sitting outside the little room I have experienced the most uncontrollable shaking and sweating in my life. The sheer importance of a pass or fail, and the opportunity to retake any exam also pass me by.

The stress here is on the whole, the fear of failure, the desire to do well the first time round, and not be the object of ridicule, which of course would not occur anyway. Looking back I can write this with confidence, but I'm sure that if I ever took another exam again my heart would rush, and my hands would prickle once again with the sweat of fear.

When we took our 'O' levels I was very worried, especially as I was expected to get all 'A' grades. I had always done well in previous exams, but people always feel that whatever public exams they take are going to

She will call women of 40 'girls' and this makes cross because she complains of male councillors doing the same. She says she's not Feminist, but then she goes and sets up a womens committee in both the County Council and the City Council. I feel she is contradictory-the worst thing is when she keeps telling me that I (and my brother aged 27 years) should get married. I don't know how she can do all these Women's Issues things and still want her own daughter to get married and have children; I think she's still very out of touch. My mother is still rather afraid of radical feminists and also Lesbians-this part of feminism is what she can't cope with and it annoys me. I admire what she's managed to do in her life, but I want to do more.

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be really important, and will affect their lives, etc. etc. My parents tried to be helpful by saying, "You do well anyway," but this didn't really do much for me. My mother thought I'd start revising too late, and I know she didn't like my habit of 'cramming' the night before at twelve o'clock.

I think worst of all was the high level of expectation; even though I did do well I became superstitious, like touching wood, crossing my fingers before the exam-things I never do in normal life.

One thing helped relieve the tension-I had sent off a film from my camera, and the pictures came back on the first day of the exams, including some very amusing ones of my friends. When they didn't know how I could be in a happy mood on such a morning, I showed them the pictures, and laughing together did ease the situation.

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## REVISION

It's funny, but once I am getting into revising a subject, I enjoy it, and wonder how I could ever loathe the task. I usually set myself a process for taking in work and once I get into the rhythm it's easy.

Unfortunately, I'm really apathetic when everybody else discusses revision and tells you how much they've done. I feel really jealous and guilty when I think that I haven't done anything, and I start to panic. My worst habit is cramming! It sickens me to think that I could stoop to such a low form of working.

Stress—that's my middle name!

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## PANIC

The middle of the exam, the most important question on that paper and my mind goes blank. The next feeling is anger—I'd revised all my work thoroughly but had no knowledge which could be applied in any way whatsoever to this question. The reason that I didn't know the necessary information? I'd been away for the lesson concerned, had asked a friend for the



notes she'd made and been told "we just went over in more detail the notes from the previous lesson." Great-some friend she turned out to be; just because she was in the middle of a gossip with someone else, she couldn't be bothered to get me her notes and so she lied. Why couldn't she have said she didn't have them with her and would give me them later? My mind dwelt a few moments on this problem, then gave up, put it all to the back of my mind, and tried to concentrate on the rest of the paper.

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### JUST LIKE A JACKIE STORY

Having just read "Just like a Jackie Story" I felt I should write one point which this article omits for me. It does not include the compulsion which many young teenagers feel to read it. I've always had the "Beano" (and still do) and yet I remember clearly asking my parents if they would buy me 'Jackie'. I'd never read one before and I was curious. I was shocked when they refused and insisted it was 'not the sort of magazine for me!' I spent the best part of a year going into newsagents and flicking through the forbidden magazines and coming out feeling incredibly guilty as if I'd committed some terrible sin.

When I eventually sat down and read a whole one (one of my friend's - not mine) I was fascinated and addicted, especially by the photo - stories. From then on I had her cast-offs regularly. It was then that I became increasingly concerned and obsessed with the fact that I didn't have a 'guy!' These worries occupied most of the time when I was lying in bed. I tried to make myself attractive to 'men' and yet the harder I tried the less success I appeared to be having and the more depressed I became.

Looking back on it now, I reproach these 'Jackie' magazines for trying to make me grow up before I was ready to accept my sexuality and worst of all for crushing any individualism, making me 'one of the crowd'. I have spent three years struggling to regain something which should never have been lost. "Looking pretty/attractive" seems to be what all Jackie magazines dwell on, whereas I have come to realise an alert mind is much more attractive - for self respect. Maybe 'clever' girls frighten men, but in the long run they will find it more of an asset. I really should have listened to my parents at the age of 13 and steered clear of all Jackie mags., but that rebellion was part of growing up too.

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1. "This little girls with well-shaped breasts  
she loves the love of women best  
A hum of a day, don't hum it away  
Don't listen to what the neighbours say  
Once more, more plain  
There is no cover  
Your daughter loves a woman, mother  
Your daughter is a woman lover".
  
2. You wished you'd never told your mother  
That you had a woman lover  
The disappointment and rejection  
Misunderstanding your position  
Feelings that she hid, but failed  
Your daughter loves a woman  
Your daughter is a woman  
Your daughter  
Someone's daughter, but no longer  
Someone's wife  
No longer leading someone else's life  
All the ugly words and phrases  
Screaming from the tabloid pages  
Man-hating sexual deviants  
So hard for mothers to accept  
Maternal feelings out of step  
With her traditional capitalist stance  
You made your choice - you had no other  
You went and chose your female lover  
Your daughter - still your daughter, mother.

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A group of us, after finals, were sharing a villa in Portugal. It had been a fantastic, but expensive, dream holiday. Cooking, shopping, conflicts about who fancied who had been resolved and we talked about sharing a house on our return to Manchester. There was a good deal of banter and teasing centred around cooking and cleaning skills and who stayed in bed all day ... and so we planned our joint household.....

Three weeks later all four of us; Brian, Alan, Joanne and I were one big happy family, or so we thought. The holiday had been a novelty. Just a laugh, but now we had to get used to each other properly, had to adjust to each others idiosyncracies. The first couple of days were a joke, waking to the smell of burnt toast, finding frazzled bacon on the plate! Typical of me. So Jo and I decided to take over the management of the household—we didn't realise what we were letting ourselves in for. We did expect at least a little help, but now it has become a daily routine. Get up at 7.00, I make the breakfast, clear up afterwards and then make the beds before going off to work. Joanne hasn't got a job as yet, so she washes the clothes, cleans the house etc., while the men are at work. Come home,

make tea, wash up, occasionally Brian will offer to dry up, but very rarely. It seems now that they totally depend on us to look after them, apart from making decisions which is always done by the 'heads of the house'. I thought it would be bliss, having a man about the house, but now I feel totally used and taken for granted. I've given up my job now. Brian was livid, he doesn't realise that looking after him has turned into a full-time job!

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